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# V. I. LENIN

## SELECTED WORKS

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### VOLUME IV

## The Years of Reaction and of the New Revival (1908 - 1914)



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	<i>Page</i>
CONTROVERSIAL QUESTIONS. <i>An Open Party and the Marxists</i>	124
I. The Decision of 1908 . . . . .	124
II. The Decision of 1910 . . . . .	128
III. The Attitude of the Liquidators to the Decisions of 1908 and 1910 . . . . .	131
IV. The Class Meaning of Liquidationism . . . . .	135
V. The Slogan of Struggle for an Open Party . . . . .	138
VI. . . . .	142

## PART II

## THE YEARS OF REVIVAL (1912-1914)

EXCERPTS FROM THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE PRAGUE CONFER- ENCE OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY . . . . .	149
The Present Situation and the Tasks of the Party . . . .	149
Liquidationism and the Group of Liquidators . . . . .	151
The Nature and Organisational Forms of Party Work . .	152
THE REVOLUTIONARY REVIVAL . . . . .	155
THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY . . . . .	163
To the Executive Committee of the German Social-Demo- cratic Party . . . . .	163
The Situation in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party Since January 1912 . . . . .	163
What is the Relation of the Hitherto Neutral Russian Social-Democrats to the So-Called Organisation Com- mittee? . . . . .	164
Potemkin Villages of the Liquidators . . . . .	165
The Social-Democratic Fraction in the Third Duma . .	167
Officially Verifiable Data on the Influence of the Liquida- tors Compared With That of the Party . . . . .	168
Open Verifiable Data Concerning the Connections of the Liquidators and of the Party With the Masses of the Workers in Russia . . . . .	171
Conclusion . . . . .	173

	<i>Page</i>
THE PLATFORM OF THE REFORMISTS AND THE PLATFORM OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS . . . . .	178
VIOLATION OF UNITY UNDER COVER OF CRIES FOR UNITY . . .	187
I. On "Factionalism" . . . . .	187
II. On Schism . . . . .	192
III. Collapse of the August <i>Bloc</i> . . . . .	197
IV. A Conciliator's Advice to the "Seven" . . . . .	200
V. Trotsky's Liquidationist Views . . . . .	203
A GOOD RESOLUTION AND A BAD SPEECH . . . . .	209
ONCE MORE ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST BUREAU AND THE LIQUIDATORS . . . . .	212

## PART III

THE AGRARIAN-PEASANT QUESTION IN THE YEARS OF  
REACTION AND OF THE NEW REVIVAL (1908-1914)

LETTER TO I. I. SKVORTSOV-STEPANOV . . . . .	219
THE QUESTION OF THE (GENERAL) AGRARIAN POLICY OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT . . . . .	226
THE AGRARIAN QUESTION AND THE PRESENT STATE OF RUSSIA. <i>Notes of a Publicist</i> . . . . .	242

## PART IV

## THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN THE PERIOD 1908-1914

ON THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION . . . . .	249
I. What is Self-Determination of Nations? . . . . .	249
II. The Concrete Historical Presentation of the Question . . . . .	255
III. The Concrete Peculiarities of the National Question in Russia and Russia's Bourgeois-Democratic Re- formation . . . . .	258
IV. "Practicalness" in the National Question . . . . .	263
VII. The Resolution of the London International Con- gress, 1896 . . . . .	269
VIII. Karl Marx the Utopian and Rosa Luxemburg the Practical . . . . .	274
IX. The 1903 Programme and its Liquidators . . . . .	280
X. Conclusion . . . . .	289

## PART V

PROBLEMS OF THE INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY  
MOVEMENT IN THE PERIOD 1908-1914

	<i>Page</i>
INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL IN WORLD POLITICS . . . . .	297
DEMOCRACY AND NARODISM IN CHINA . . . . .	305
REGENERATED CHINA . . . . .	312
• THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST CONGRESS IN STUTTGART . .	314
MILITANT MILITARISM AND THE ANTI-MILITARIST TACTICS OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY . . . . .	324
WHAT SHOULD NOT BE IMITATED IN THE GERMAN LABOUR MOVEMENT . . . . .	334
EXPLANATORY NOTES . . . . .	341

## PREFACE

THE present volume of the *Selected Works* of Lenin covers the period from the defeat of the first Russian revolution of 1905-07 to the outbreak of the imperialist war in 1914.

The history of the Party during these years can be divided into two parts:

1. The period of reaction—1908 to 1911—when the working class, bleeding from the wounds inflicted by the triumphant counter-revolution, was suffering from apathy and depression, and the Party, passing through a stage of disintegration and chaos, was assailed by enemies within its ranks both from the Right and the “Left.” On the one side were the Menshevik liquidators, who in their progress along the path of opportunism adopted an open anti-Party attitude: they rejected the very idea of an illegal revolutionary party, advocating instead the formation of what Lenin aptly termed a “Stolypin Labour Party,” and turned their backs on underground, revolutionary activities; they called on the working class to adapt itself to the “legal possibilities” of the time and to fight for minor, partial reforms instead of for the main revolutionary slogans of the Party, as advanced by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. In other words, they called upon the working class to betray its revolutionary past and to make peace with the reaction under Stolypin and the bourgeoisie, which was coming to terms with the autocracy. On the other side was a small insignificant group of Bolsheviks who attacked the Party line from the “Left” and under cover of “Left” phrases rejected every kind of “legal” work, called for a boycott of the Duma and for the boycott of all the legal forms of organisation and struggle of the working class. The advocacy of this revision of the Party policy from “Left” positions was accompanied and fostered by attempts to revise the very philosophy of Marxism, to turn from its corner-

stone, dialectical materialism, to idealism and religion, from Marx to Kant and the neo-Kantians, Mach and Avenarius.

Between these two opportunist groups—the “liquidators” on the one hand and the “boycottists” and “God-seekers,” etc., on the other, with the conciliators trying to reconcile both sides—the “centrist” Trotsky was weaving his intrigues against Lenin and the Party, plotting to unite the opposite tendencies in opportunism and to isolate the true Marxian revolutionary Party trend represented by Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

2. The second period, which commenced in 1912, was heralded by the Lena gold-fields events, the resulting revival of the movement in Russia, and by the Prague Party Conference which finally put the Mensheviks, the adepts at “Left” phrases, and the intermediaries between them, Trotsky and his followers, outside the Party.

It was through these difficult times that Lenin, in his writings and organisational work, steered the Party to unity and victory. The work he did at that time can serve as a model of the “struggle on two fronts.” His writings give a masterful analysis of the problems facing the revolutionary working class movement at that time; they are a call for action, as against renegacy and depression, a guide to true revolutionary tactics combining “underground” work with the utmost utilisation of all legal facilities (the press, the Duma tribune, the trade unions, the social insurance and similar organisations, etc.) while always preserving the independence of the working class movement and protecting the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat and its revolutionary party.

Thus, freed from all opportunist and Trotskyist elements, trained in the struggle on two fronts, enriched by the experience of the severe conditions of underground work, strong in its unity on the basis of the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory, steeled by proletarian discipline and maintaining firm ties with the masses, the Bolshevik Party under the leadership of Lenin emerged from this difficult period and entered the period of the imperialist war as the only steadfast revolutionary party capable of taking up and conducting a resolute fight to transform the in-

perialist war into civil war. This it actually achieved, and by the victory of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia in 1917 it laid the foundations of the world proletarian revolution.

Only a small part of Lenin's writings of this period, which in the complete edition of his works extends to four volumes—Volumes XIV-XVII—could be included in this volume. A section containing a series of his articles on the right of nations to self-determination and another dealing with the international labour movement and international problems are also included in this volume.

As in all previous volumes, the material is arranged in chronological order.

*Publisher's Note, 1943*

The present volume is a reprint of the edition published in 1936, with a few textual emendations taken from revised translations. The explanatory notes have been omitted. Readers will find it helpful to refer to the History of the C.P.S.U. (B), and to use its index.







## ON TO THE HIGH ROAD

WE have left behind us the year of disintegration, the year of ideological and political discord, the year in which the Party could not find its road. Our Party organisations have all become reduced in membership. Some of them—namely, those whose membership was least proletarian—fell to pieces. The semi-legal institutions of the Party, created by the revolution, were raided time after time. Things reached such a state that some elements within the Party, which had succumbed to the influence of that disintegration, began to ask whether it was necessary to preserve the old Social-Democratic Party, whether it was necessary to continue *its* work, whether it was necessary to go “underground” once more, and how this was to be done; and the extreme Right (the so-called liquidationist trend) answered this question in the sense that it was necessary to legalise ourselves at all costs, even at the price of an open renunciation of the Party programme, tactics and organisation. This was undoubtedly not only an organisational but also an ideological and political crisis.

The recent All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party led the Party on to the high road, and apparently marks the turning point in the development of the Russian labour movement after the victory of the counter-revolution. The decisions of the conference, published in a special “Communication” issued by the Central Committee of our Party, have been confirmed by the Central Committee, and, therefore, pending the next congress, stand as the decisions of the whole Party. These decisions give a very definite answer to the question concerning the causes and the significance of the crisis, as well as the means of overcoming it. By working in the spirit of the resolutions of this conference, by striving to make *all* Party workers clearly and fully realise the present tasks of the Party, our organisations will suc-

ceed in strengthening and consolidating their forces for united and effective revolutionary Social-Democratic work.

The main cause of the Party crisis is indicated in the preamble of the resolution on organisation. This main cause is the purging of the Party of the vacillating intellectual and petty-bourgeois elements, who joined the labour movement mainly in the hope of an early triumph of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and were not able to withstand the period of reaction. Their instability was revealed both in theory ("retreat from revolutionary Marxism": the resolution on the present situation) and in tactics (the "curtailment of slogans"), as well as in the domain of the organisational policy of the Party. The class conscious workers repelled this instability and came out resolutely against the liquidators; they began to take the management as well as the leadership of the Party organisations into their own hands. The reason this basic nucleus of our Party was unable to overcome the elements of disintegration and of crisis at one stroke was not only that the task was a great and difficult one amidst the triumph of the counter-revolution, but also that a certain indifference towards the Party was displayed in the ranks of those workers who, although revolutionary minded, were not sufficiently class conscious. It is precisely to the class conscious workers of Russia that the decisions of the conference are addressed in the first place—as decisions representing the crystallised opinion of Social-Democracy concerning the means of fighting disintegration and vacillations.

A Marxian analysis of present-day class relations and of the new policy of tsarism: the indication of the immediate aim of the struggle which our Party continues as before to set itself; the appreciation of the lessons of the revolution as regards the correctness of the revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics; the explanation of the causes of the Party crisis, pointing out the role of the proletarian elements of the Party in combating this crisis; the solution of the problem of the relation between the illegal and legal organisations; the recognition of the necessity of utilising the Duma tribune and of working out precise instructions for the guidance of our Duma fraction together with direct criticism of its errors—such was the principal content of the decisions of the conference which give a

complete answer to the question of the definite path the party of the working class is to choose in the difficult period we are now passing through. Let us carefully examine this answer.

The interrelation of classes in their political groupings remains the same as that which was typical during the past period of the direct revolutionary struggle of the masses. The overwhelming majority of the peasants cannot but strive for an agrarian revolution which would destroy semi-feudal landownership and which cannot be achieved without the overthrow of tsarism. The triumph of the reaction has been particularly oppressive for the democratic elements of the peasantry, which is incapable of forming a solid organisation; but despite all oppression, despite the Black Hundred Duma, despite the extreme instability of the Trudoviki,<sup>1</sup> the revolutionary attitude of the peasant masses is clearly evidenced even in the debates in the Third Duma. The fundamental position of the proletariat in regard to the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia remains unaltered: to guide the democratic peasantry; to wrest it from the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie, the Cadet Party,<sup>2</sup> which continues to draw ever closer to the Octobrists, notwithstanding the petty, private squabbles, and which quite recently has been striving to organise national-liberalism and to support tsarism and reaction by chauvinist agitation. The resolution states that the struggle, as hitherto, is being waged for the complete abolition of the monarchy and the conquest of political power by the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry.

The autocracy, as hitherto, is the principal enemy of the proletariat and of the whole of democracy. However, it would be a mistake to imagine that it remains unchanged. The Stolypin "constitution" and Stolypin's agrarian policy mark a new stage in the disintegration of the old, semi-patriarchal, semi-feudal tsarism, a new step on the road towards its transformation into a bourgeois monarchy. The delegates from the Caucasus, who wished either to delete such a characterisation of the present situation or to substitute "plutocratic" for "bourgeois," were wrong. The autocracy

<sup>1</sup> Group of Toil, the peasant representatives in the Duma largely akin to the Socialist-Revolutionaries.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The Constitutional-Democratic Party.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

has for a long time past been *plutocratic*, but it is only after the first stage of the revolution, under the influence of its blows, that the autocracy is becoming *bourgeois*, both in its agrarian policy and in its direct, nationally organised alliance with certain strata of the bourgeoisie. The autocracy has been nursing the bourgeoisie for a long time now; the bourgeoisie, with the help of the ruble, has long been gaining access to "high quarters" and influence on legislation and administration as well as high places by the side of the noble aristocracy; but the peculiar feature of the present situation is that the autocracy was forced to set up a representative assembly for certain strata of the bourgeoisie, to juggle between them and the feudal landlords and to set up an alliance of these sections in the Duma; it was forced to abandon all the hopes it had placed in the patriarchalism of the muzhik and to seek support against the rural masses among the rich peasants, who are ruining the peasant commune.

The autocracy cloaks itself with pseudo-constitutional institutions, but at the same time its class essence is being exposed as never before, owing to the alliance concluded by the tsar with the Purishkeviches and the Guchkovs,<sup>1</sup> and with no one else. The autocracy attempts to take upon itself the fulfilment of those tasks of the bourgeois revolution which are objectively necessary—the setting up of a people's representative assembly which would really manage the affairs of bourgeois society, and the purging of the countryside of mediæval, entangled and antiquated agrarian relations; but the practical results of these new steps taken by the autocracy are, so far, exactly nil, and this shows still more clearly that other forces and other means are necessary for the fulfilment of the historical task. In the minds of millions of people who are inexperienced in politics, the autocracy was hitherto contrasted with popular representation in general; now, the struggle narrows its aims and more concretely defines its task as the struggle for power in the state, which determines the very character and meaning of representation. That is why the Third Duma marks a special

<sup>1</sup> Purishkevich, a Bessarabian landlord, extreme reactionary, leader of the League of Russian People, better known as the Black Hundreds; Guchkov, leader of the moderate liberal Octobrist Party—*Ed. Eng. ed*

stage in the disintegration of old tsarism, in the intensification of its spirit of adventurism, in the deepening of the old revolutionary tasks, in enlarging the field of the struggle (and the numbers taking part in the struggle) for these tasks.

We must get over this stage; the new conditions of the present period require new forms of struggle; the use of the Duma tribune is an absolute necessity; the prolonged task of educating and organising the masses of the proletariat assumes prime importance; the combination of illegal and legal organisations raises special problems before the Party; the popularisation and explanation of the experience of the revolution, which is being discredited by the liberals and by the liquidator intellectuals, are necessary both for theoretical and practical purposes. But the tactical line of the Party—which must be able to take into account the new conditions in applying the methods and means of struggle—remains unchanged. The correctness of revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics, states one of the resolutions of the conference, is confirmed by the experience of the mass struggle in 1905-07. The defeat of the revolution, at the close of this first campaign, revealed that it was not that the tasks were wrong, not that the immediate aims were “utopian,” or that the methods and means were incorrect, but that there was insufficient preparation of forces, inadequate breadth and depth of the revolutionary crisis—and on its deepening and widening Stolypin and Co. are working with most praiseworthy zeal! Let the liberals and terrified intellectuals lose heart after the first genuinely mass battle for freedom, let them repeat like cowards: don't go where you have been beaten before, don't tread that fatal path again. The class conscious proletariat will answer them: the great wars in history, the great revolutionary problems were solved only by the advanced classes returning to the attack again and again; and they achieved victory after having learned the lessons of defeat. Defeated armies learn well. The revolutionary classes of Russia have been defeated in their first campaign, but the revolutionary situation remains. In new forms and by other ways, sometimes much more slowly than we would wish, the revolutionary crisis is approaching once more, is maturing again. We must carry out the prolonged task of preparing larger

masses for the revolutionary crisis; this preparation must be more serious, taking into consideration the higher and more concrete tasks; and the more successfully we fulfil this task, the more certain will be our victory in the new struggle. The Russian proletariat may be proud of the fact that in 1905, under its leadership, a nation of slaves for the first time transformed itself into a mighty host attacking tsarism, into an army of the revolution. And now the same proletariat will know how to carry out persistently, staunchly and patiently the work of educating and training new cadres of a mightier revolutionary force.

As we have said already, the using of the Duma tribune is a necessary, component part of this work of education and training. The resolution of the conference on the Duma fraction indicates to our Party that road which comes nearest—if we were to seek instances in history—to the experiences of German Social-Democracy at the time of the Anti-Socialist Law. The illegal Party must know how to use, it must learn how to use, the legal Duma fraction; it must train the latter to be a Party organisation equal to its tasks. The most mistaken tactics, the most regrettable deviation from consistent proletarian work as dictated by the conditions of the present period, would be to raise the question of recalling the fraction from the Duma (there were two *otzovists*<sup>1</sup> at the conference, but they did not raise the question openly) or to refrain from directly and openly criticising its mistakes and from enumerating them in the resolution (as some delegates insisted at the conference<sup>2</sup>). The resolution fully recognises that the fraction has committed mistakes for which it was not alone to blame and which were quite similar to the inevitable mistakes of all our Party organisations. But there are other mistakes—deviations from the *political line* of the Party. Since such deviations occurred, since they were made by an organisation openly acting in the name of the whole Party, the Party was bound to declare clearly and definitely that these were deviations. In the history of West European Socialist Parties, instances of ab-

<sup>1</sup> From the Russian word *otzvat*, meaning to recall. The term applied to a group of Bolsheviks who demanded the recall of the Social-Democratic deputies from the Duma.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The Mensheviks.—*Ed.*

normal relations between the parliamentary fractions and the Party have occurred more than once; to this very day these relations are quite often abnormal in the Latin countries<sup>1</sup> where the fractions do not display sufficient Party spirit. We must from the very outset organise Social-Democratic parliamentarism in Russia on a different basis; we must at once establish team-work in this field, so that every Social-Democratic deputy may really feel that the Party is backing him, that the Party is distressed over his mistakes, and takes care to straighten his path—so that every Party worker may take part in the general Duma work of the Party, learning from the business-like Marxian criticism of its steps, feeling it his duty to assist it, and striving to subordinate the special work of the fraction to Party propaganda and agitational activity as a whole.

The conference was the first authoritative meeting of delegates from the biggest Party organisations, which discussed the activities of the Social-Democratic Duma fraction for the whole session. And the decision of the conference shows very clearly how our Party will shape its Duma work, how very exacting it will be in this field in relation both to itself and to the fraction, how undeviatingly and consistently it proposes to work on fostering genuinely Social-Democratic parliamentarism.

The question of our attitude to the Duma fraction has a tactical and an organisational aspect. In the latter respect the resolution on the Duma fraction is only the application of the general principles of our organisational policy to a particular case, principles laid down by the conference in the resolution giving instructions on the question of organisation. The conference has recorded two fundamental tendencies in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party on this question: one of them shifts the centre of gravity to the illegal Party organisation, the other—which is more or less akin to liquidationism—shifts the centre of gravity to the legal and semi-legal organisations. The fact is that the present situation is characterised, as we have already pointed out, by the exit from the Party of a certain number of Party workers, especially intellectuals,

<sup>1</sup> Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Rumania.—*Ed.*

but partly also proletarians. The liquidators raise the question as to whether it is the best, the most active elements that are abandoning the Party and choosing the legal organisations as their field of activity, or whether it is the "vacillating intellectual and petty-bourgeois elements" that are leaving the Party. Needless to say, by determinedly rejecting and condemning liquidationism, the conference replied that it was the latter elements. The most proletarian elements of the Party, and those elements of the intelligentsia that were most consistent in principle and most Social-Democratic, remained true to the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The desertions from the Party mean its purification, they mean getting rid of the least constant, of the unreliable friends, of the "camp-followers" (*Mitläufer*), who always joined the proletariat for a while and who were recruited from among the petty bourgeoisie or from among the "*déclassés*," i.e., people thrown out of the orbit of some definite class.

From this evaluation of the principle of Party organisation logically follows the line of organisational policy adopted by the conference. To strengthen the illegal Party organisation, to create Party nuclei in all spheres of work, to create in the first instance "purely Party committees consisting of workers, even if their number be small, in each industrial enterprise," to concentrate the leading functions in the hands of leaders of the Social-Democratic movement from the ranks of the workers themselves—such is the task today. And, of course, the task of these nuclei and committees must be to utilise all the semi-legal and, as far as possible, legal organisations, to maintain the "closest contact with the masses," and to direct the work in such a way that Social-Democracy responds to all the needs of the masses. Every nucleus and every Party workers' committee must become a "base for agitation, propaganda and practical organisational work among the masses," i.e., they must go where the masses are and try at every step to push the consciousness of the latter in the direction of socialism, linking up every specific question with the general tasks of the proletariat, transforming every organisational undertaking into the cause of



*class* consolidation, thus winning by their energy and ideological influence (not by their rank and title, of course) the leading role in all the proletarian legal organisations. Even if these nuclei and committees be very few in number at times, they will be linked together by Party tradition, Party organisation and a definite class programme, and even two or three Social-Democratic members of the Party will be able, instead of becoming dissolved in the amorphous legal organisation, to pursue their *Party* line under all conditions and circumstances and in all kinds of situations, to influence their environment in the spirit of the whole Party, and not allow themselves to be swamped by this environment.

Though mass organisations of one type or another may be dissolved, though the legal trade unions may be stamped out, though any open venture of the workers under the regime of counter-revolution may be foiled by police captiousness—no power on earth can prevent the concentration of masses of workers in a capitalist country; and Russia has already become such a country. One way or another, legally or semi-legally, openly or covertly, the working class will find its own rallying points; the class conscious Party Social-Democrats will everywhere and always march in front of the masses, everywhere and always act in solidarity in order to exercise influence over the masses in the Party spirit. And Social-Democracy which has proved in open revolution that it is the party of the class, the party that succeeded in leading millions in strikes, in the uprising of 1905, as well as in the elections of 1906-07, will now also be able to remain the party of the class, the party of the masses, the vanguard, which in the hardest times will not separate itself from the bulk of the army, but will know how to help the latter overcome these hard times, consolidate its ranks once more, and train ever more and more new fighters.

Let the hounds of the Black Hundred rejoice and howl both inside and outside the Duma, in the capital and in out-of-the-way places, let the reaction rage—the wise Mr. Stolypin cannot take a single step without bringing nearer the fall of the equilibrating autocracy, without forming new tangles of political impossibilities

and absurdities, without adding new and fresh forces to the ranks of the proletariat and to the ranks of the revolutionary elements of the peasant masses. The party which succeeds in consolidating itself for persistent work in contact with the masses, the party of the advanced class, the party which succeeds in organising the vanguard of this class and directs its forces in such a way as to exercise influence in a Social-Democratic spirit over every manifestation in the life of the proletariat—such a party will win no matter what happens.

February [January] 1909

## DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE TASKS OF THE PARTY

THE present political situation is characterised by the following features:

a) The old feudal autocracy is developing and becoming transformed into a bourgeois monarchy which cloaks absolutism with pseudo-constitutional forms. The alliance between tsarism, the Black Hundred landlords and the upper strata of the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie has been publicly consolidated and recognised by the *coup d'état* of June 16 [3] and by the establishment of the Third Duma. Forced by necessity definitely to take the path of the capitalist development of Russia, and striving to keep to this path so that the power and incomes of the feudal landlords might be preserved, the autocracy is manœuvring between this class and the representatives of capital. Their petty squabbles are utilised to prop up absolutism, which together with these classes wages a furious counter-revolutionary struggle against the Social-Democratic proletariat and the democratic peasantry, who revealed their strength in the recent mass struggle.

b) The agrarian policy of present-day tsarism is similarly distinguished by its bourgeois-Bonapartist character. It has lost all faith in the naive devotion of the peasant masses to the monarchy. It seeks an alliance with the rich peasants and surrenders the villages to them to be plundered. The autocracy is making convulsive efforts to break up all communal-allotment landownership as soon as possible and to strengthen exclusively private property in land. Such a policy renders all the contradictions of capitalism in the village a hundred times more acute and accelerates the division of the village into an insignificant minority of reactionaries, on the

one hand, and the revolutionary proletarian and semi-proletarian mass, on the other.

c) The liberal bourgeoisie, which is headed by the Cadet Party and which became counter-revolutionary at the very first big actions of the masses in the revolution, continues to follow the counter-revolutionary road, drawing still closer to the Octobrists, and by its tsarist-nationalist agitation—which expresses the growth of the self-consciousness of the bourgeoisie as a class—is actually serving absolutism and the feudal landlords.

d) As may be seen from the conduct of their cowed representatives—who really misrepresented them—in the Third Duma, the peasant masses, in spite of all the persecution of the democratic elements in the villages and notwithstanding all their vacillations, continue to remain on the side of the revolutionary-democratic agrarian revolution, which by completely destroying landlordism would secure the speediest, widest and freest development of the productive forces in capitalist Russia. The law of November 22 [9]<sup>1</sup> merely serves to accelerate the division of the peasant masses into irreconcilably hostile and politically conscious forces.

e) The proletariat has received and is receiving most of the blows dealt both by the autocracy and by rapidly uniting and advancing capital. In spite of this, the proletariat, as compared with the other classes, preserves the maximum of unity and the greatest loyalty to its class party with which it was linked by the revolution. The proletariat continues its struggle for its class interests and deepens its socialist class consciousness, remaining the only class capable of consistently leading the new revolutionary struggle.

f) On the whole, there is no doubt that the objective tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia remain unfulfilled. The continuing economic crisis, unemployment and starvation prove that the latest policy of the autocracy cannot ensure the conditions necessary for the capitalist development of Russia. This policy inevitably leads to an intensification of the conflict between the democratic masses and the ruling classes, to the growth of discontent among new strata of the population and to a sharpening

<sup>1</sup> The law which permitted the peasant to leave the village commune and granted him ownership rights in his plot of communal land.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

and deepening of the political struggle of the various classes. In such an economic and political situation a new revolutionary crisis inevitably ripens.

g) The general sharpening of the situation on the world market, due chiefly to the changes that have taken place in the industrial conditions of Western Europe in the direction of a crisis, which in 1908 passed into the stage of depression, and also due to the revolutionary movements in the East, which mark the creation of national capitalist states, results in keener competition, leads to more frequent international clashes, thereby intensifying the class antagonisms between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and rendering the general international situation more and more revolutionary.

On the basis of such a situation, the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party recognises that the following constitute the fundamental tasks of the Party at the present time:

- 1) To explain to the broad masses of the people the meaning and significance of the latest policy of the autocracy and the role of the socialist proletariat, which, pursuing an independent class policy, must lead the democratic peasantry in contemporary politics and in the forthcoming revolutionary struggles.

- 2) To study comprehensively and widely popularise the experience of the mass struggle of 1905-07, which gave us indispensable lessons in revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics.

- 3) To strengthen the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in the shape it assumed during the revolutionary period; to maintain the traditions of its irreconcilable struggle against autocracy and the reactionary classes as well as against bourgeois liberalism; to fight against deviations from revolutionary Marxism, against the curtailment of the slogans of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, and against the attempts to dissolve the illegal organisation of the R.S.D.L.P. that are observed among certain Party elements, which have yielded to the influence of disintegration.

At the same time it should be borne in mind that only by aiding the already marked process of transferring Party functions to the hands of Social-Democratic workers themselves, and only by creat-

ing and strengthening the illegal Party organisations, can the Party be brought on to the high road of its proper development.

4) To render all assistance to the economic struggles of the working class, in accordance with the resolutions of the London and Stuttgart Congresses.

5) To utilise the Duma and the Duma tribune for revolutionary Social-Democratic propaganda and agitation.

6) First on the order of the day is the prolonged task of training, organising and welding together the class conscious masses of the proletariat. Then, as a task subordinated to this, it is necessary to extend the work of organisation to the peasantry and the army, especially in the form of literary propaganda and agitation, and in this our main attention must be given to the socialist education of the proletarian and the semi-proletarian elements among the peasantry and in the army.

January 1909 [December 1908].

## RESOLUTIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE ENLARGED EDITORIAL BOARD OF *PROLETARY*

### I. ON OTZOVISM AND ULTIMATUMISM

THE slogan issued by the revolutionary wing of our Party calling for the boycott of the Bulygin Duma<sup>1</sup> and the First State Duma played a great revolutionary role at the time and was taken up with enthusiasm by all the most active and most revolutionary sections of the working class.

The direct revolutionary struggle of the broad masses was followed by a severe period of counter-revolution; the Social-Democrats had to apply their revolutionary tactics to this new political situation, and, in connection with this, one of the most important tasks was to utilise the open Duma tribunal for the purpose of assisting Social-Democratic agitation and organisation.

Yet, amidst the rapid change of events, a section of the workers who had participated in the direct revolutionary struggle was unable to proceed at once to apply the revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics under the new conditions of the counter-revolution, and they confined themselves to the mere repetition of slogans which *had been* revolutionary in the period of open civil war, but which now, if merely repeated, might retard the process of consolidating the proletariat under the new conditions of struggle.

On the other hand, under the conditions of this difficult crisis, in an atmosphere of depression in the revolutionary struggle, of apathy and consternation even among a section of the workers, at a time when the workers' organisations were being destroyed, when the strength of their resistance to disintegrating influences was

<sup>1</sup> The proposed Duma that was to be convened according to a constitution drawn up by Bulygin, Minister of the Interior, in August 1905, which was to have merely advisory powers. The Duma was never convened owing to the outbreak of the revolution in October 1905.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

inadequate, an attitude of indifference towards the political struggle in general, and of particularly strong indifference towards the Duma work of Social-Democracy, set in among a section of the working class.

It is under such conditions that so-called otzovism and ultimatumism may meet with temporary success among these sections of the proletariat.

The proceedings of the Third Duma, which openly mocks at the needs of the workers, enhance the otzovist mood among the same sections of the workers, who, owing to their inadequate Social-Democratic training, are as yet unable to grasp the fact that the very proceedings of the Third Duma provide the Social-Democrats with the opportunity to utilise that representative assembly of the exploiting classes in a revolutionary manner, for the purpose of exposing before the broadest sections of the people the real nature of the autocracy and of all the counter-revolutionary forces, as well as the need for revolutionary struggle.

Moreover, the otzovist mood among this section of the workers has been fostered by the exceedingly grave errors committed by the Social-Democratic Duma fraction, especially during the first year of its activity.

Recognising that this otzovist attitude has a detrimental effect on the socialist and revolutionary training of the working class, the Bolshevik fraction considers it necessary:

a) *in regard to these sections of the workers*, to persevere in the work of Social-Democratic training and organisation, to explain systematically and persistently the utter political futility of otzovism and ultimatumism, the real significance of Social-Democratic parliamentarism and the role of the Duma tribune for the Social-Democrats during the period of counter-revolution;

b) *in regard to the Social-Democratic Duma fraction and Duma work in general*, to establish close connections between the Duma fraction and the advanced workers, to render it every assistance, to see to it that the whole Party supervises and brings pressure upon it, *inter alia*, by openly explaining its mistakes, to see to it that the Party guides the activities of the fraction as a Party organ



and, generally, to see to it that the Bolsheviks carry out the decisions of the last Party conference on this matter; for only the increased attention of working class circles to the activities of the Social-Democratic Duma fraction, and their organised participation in the Duma activities of the Social-Democrats, can really straighten out the tactics of our Duma fraction;

c) *in regard to the Right wing of the Party*, which is dragging the Duma fraction on to an anti-Party road and by that is tearing it away from the workers' vanguard, to wage a systematic, irreconcilable struggle against it, and to expose these tactics which are fatal to the Party.

\* \* \*

In the course of the bourgeois-democratic revolution our Party was joined by a number of elements that were not attracted by its purely proletarian programme, but mainly by its glorious and energetic fight for democracy; these elements adopted the revolutionary-democratic slogans of the proletarian party, but without connecting them with the entire struggle of the socialist proletariat as a whole.

Such elements, which are not sufficiently imbued with the proletarian point of view, were also found in the ranks of our Bolshevik faction. In these troubled times such elements more and more display their lack of Social-Democratic consistency, and, coming into ever sharper contradiction with the fundamentals of revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics, have been, during the past year, creating a tendency which is trying to give shape to the theory of otzovism and ultimatumism, but which in fact is only elevating to a principle and intensifying false notions about Social-Democratic parliamentarism and the work of Social-Democracy in the Duma.

These attempts to transform an otzovist mood into a complete system of otzovist policy lead to the theory which in essence expresses the ideology of political indifference, on the one hand, and of anarchist vagaries, on the other. In spite of all its revolutionary phraseology the theory of otzovism and ultimatumism in reality represents, to a considerable extent, the reverse side of constitutional illusions based on the hope that the State Duma

itself can satisfy certain urgent needs of the people, and, in essence, it substitutes petty-bourgeois tendencies for proletarian ideology.

No less harmful to the Social-Democratic cause than open otzovism is so-called ultimatumism (*i.e.*, that tendency which on principle renounces the utilisation of the tribune of the Third Duma, or which on grounds of expediency tries to justify its failure to carry out this duty, and, while striving for the recall of the Social-Democratic fraction from the Duma, substitutes the issuing of an immediate ultimatum for the prolonged task of training the Duma fraction and straightening its line). Politically, ultimatumism at the present time is indistinguishable from otzovism; it only introduces greater confusion and disintegration by the disguised character of its otzovism. The attempts of ultimatumism to link itself up directly with boycottism, which was practised by our fraction during a certain period of the revolution, merely distort the real meaning and character of the boycott of the Bulygin and the First State Dumas, which was quite correctly applied by the overwhelming majority of our Party. By their attempt to deduce from the specific application of the boycott of representative institutions at this or that moment of the revolution that the policy of boycotting is the distinguishing feature of Bolshevik tactics in the period of counter-revolution also—ultimatumism and otzovism demonstrate that these trends are in essence the reverse side of Menshevism, which preaches indiscriminate participation in all representative institutions irrespective of the given stage of development of the revolution, irrespective of the absence or presence of a revolutionary upsurge.

All the attempts made so far by otzovism and ultimatumism to base their theory on grounds of principle have inevitably led to a negation of the fundamentals of revolutionary Marxism. The tactics proposed by them inevitably lead to a complete break with the tactics of the Left wing of international Social-Democracy as applied to present-day Russian conditions, and they lead to anarchist deviations.

Otzovist-ultimatumist agitation has already begun to cause def-

inite harm to the labour movement and to Social-Democratic work. If it continues it may become a menace to Party unity, for this agitation has already given rise to such monstrous phenomena as the alliance between the otzovists and the Socialist-Revolutionaries (in St. Petersburg ) for the purpose of preventing assistance being given to our Party representatives in the Duma; likewise it has led to their appearing publicly before the workers jointly with avowed syndicalists.

In view of all this, the enlarged editorial board of *Proletary* declares that Bolshevism as a definite tendency within the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party has nothing in common with otzovism and ultimatumism, and that the Bolshevik faction must more resolutely combat these deviations from the path of revolutionary Marxism.

## II. THE TASKS OF THE BOLSHEVIKS IN THE PARTY

In the epoch of the complete triumph of the counter-revolution which was ushered in after the dispersion of the Second Duma, force of circumstances compelled all Party activities to be concentrated on the following task: to preserve the Party organisation created in the years of the high tide of the proletarian struggle, despite all the efforts of the reaction, and notwithstanding the great depression in the proletarian class struggle, *i.e.*, to preserve it as an organisation which consciously stands on the basis of orthodox Marxism and which unites all the "national" Social-Democratic organisations for the purpose of carrying out unified revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics.

In the course of this two years' struggle for the Party and for the Party spirit, it became quite clear that, on the one hand, the Party dissociated itself from the elements that had penetrated it as a result of the special conditions of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and that, on the other hand, the revolutionary Social-Democrats had further consolidated themselves. On the one hand, the former fellow-travellers of Social-Democracy became definitely crystallised, *i.e.*, those who, on leaving the Party, transferred their

activities entirely to various legally existing organisations (co-operatives, trade unions, educational societies, commissions of the Duma fraction), and in these not only failed to carry out the policy of the Party but, on the contrary, fought the Party, and strove to wrest these organisations from the Party and to oppose them to the Party. Making a fetish of legality, and elevating to a principle the narrow forms of activity forced upon us by the temporary depression and the scattered state of the labour movement, these elements—avowed liquidators of the Party—quite obviously took their stand upon the ground of theoretical and tactical revisionism. That the closest connection exists between organisational liquidationism (the struggle against the Party institutions) and the ideological struggle against Marxian theory and the fundamental principles of the programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party—is now most clearly revealed and proved by the entire history of the efforts of its intellectual advisers to force an opportunist policy on our Duma fraction, as well as by the entire course of the struggle between the liquidators and the Party members within the legal labour organisations and in the workers' groups of the four congresses: of the people's universities, of the co-operatives, of the women and of the factory medical inspectors.

On the other hand, the Left wing of the Party, to whose lot it fell to lead the Party during this period of the decisive triumph of the counter-revolution, theoretically recognised and carried into effect the tactics of expediently combining illegal with legal Party work. This applies to all the Party work with the Duma fraction and all the Party work in the legal and semi-legal proletarian organisations. It is precisely these forms of work that have been brought to the forefront by the peculiar conditions of the present historical situation as the forms by which the illegal Party, in addition to the main forms, can influence more or less broad masses. It is precisely in these forms of activity that the Party, in practice, comes into conflict with liquidationism and deals it palpable blows. It is on this ground also that Social-Democrats of

various Party factions have been and are being drawn together.<sup>1</sup> And here, finally, on the very same questions of Party tactics and organisation in the conditions of the Third Duma period, the Bolshevik faction openly disavows the pseudo-revolutionary, unstable, non-Marxian elements, which, under cover of so-called "otzovism," have been opposing the new forms of Party activity.

At the present time, in laying down the fundamental tasks of the Bolsheviks, the enlarged editorial board of *Proletary* declares:

1) that in the further struggle for the Party and the Party spirit, the task of the Bolshevik faction, which must remain the foremost champion of the Party spirit and of the revolutionary Social-Democratic line in the Party, is actively to support the Central Committee and the central organ of the Party in every way. In the present period of the re-grouping of Party forces, only the central institutions of the entire Party can serve as the authoritative and strong representative of the Party line around which all the genuine Party and Social-Democratic elements can be rallied;

2) that in the Menshevik camp of the Party, with the official organ of the faction, *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*,<sup>2</sup> completely captive to the Menshevik liquidators, the minority of the faction, having explored the path of liquidationism to the very end, is already raising its voice in protest against this path and is again seeking a Party basis for its activities (the letter of the "Vyborg" Mensheviks<sup>3</sup> in St. Petersburg, the split among the Mensheviks in Moscow, the split in the editorial board of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, the corresponding division in the Bund, etc.),

3) that under such circumstances, the task of the Bolsheviks, who will remain the solid vanguard of the Party, is not only to continue the struggle against liquidationism and all the varieties

<sup>1</sup> The resolutions on the trade unions, on the co-operatives and a number of resolutions on Duma activities were carried *unanimously* by the Central Committee. The overwhelming majority at the last All-Russian Conference supported the Party line. The experience in conducting the central organ, the workers' groups of the said congresses, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Voice of the Social-Democrat*.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>3</sup> The Mensheviks in the Vyborg district of St. Petersburg.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

of revisionism, but also to establish closer contact with the Marxian and Party elements of the other factions, in accordance with the dictates of the common aims in the struggle for the preservation and consolidation of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

July [June] 1909.

## DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE PARTY AND OF ITS UNITY

THE editorial board of the central organ recognises that the consolidation of our Party and of its unity may at the present time be achieved only by the *rapprochement*, which has already begun, between definite *factions* that are strong and influential in the practical labour movement, and not by a moralising whimpering for their abolition. This *rapprochement* must be achieved and developed on the basis of revolutionary Social-Democratic *tactics* and an organisational policy aiming at a determined struggle against "Left" and "Right" liquidationism, especially against the latter, since the "Left," having already been defeated, represents a less serious danger.

November [October] 1909.

## NOTES OF A PUBLICIST

### I. THE "PLATFORM" OF THE ADHERENTS AND DEFENDERS OF OTZOVISM

A PAMPHLET published by the *Vperyod* group recently appeared in Paris under the title *The Present Situation and the Tasks of the Party. A Platform Drawn Up by a Group of Bolsheviks*. This is the very same group of Bolsheviks (the new faction) whose formation was announced by the enlarged editorial board of *Proletary* in the spring of last year. Now this group, "consisting of fifteen Party members—seven workers and eight intellectuals" (as the group itself states), comes forward with an attempt to give a complete, systematic and positive exposition of its own special "platform." The text of this platform bears the clear imprint of careful, painstaking collective work in an effort to smooth out all roughnesses, to remove sharp edges and to stress not so much those points on which the group is at variance with the Party as those on which it is in agreement with the Party. All the more valuable, therefore, is the new platform, as the official presentation of the views of a certain trend.

This group of Bolsheviks first gives its own "interpretation of the present historical situation of our country" (§I, pp. 3-13), then it gives its own "interpretation of Bolshevism" (§II, pp. 13-17). And it interprets the one and the other badly.

Take the first question. The view held by the Bolsheviks (and by the Party) is expounded in the resolution of the December Conference of 1903 on the present situation.<sup>1</sup> Do the authors of the new platform share the views expressed in that resolution? If they do, why do they not say so plainly? If they do, why did they draw

<sup>1</sup> See Lenin's draft of that resolution, passed by the conference with slight amendments which did not alter it in substance. present volume, pp. 13-16.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*



up a separate platform, why did they set to work to give their own particular interpretation of the situation? If they do not share these views, then again why not state clearly in what particular respect the new group opposes the views held by the Party?

But the whole point is that the new group itself has no clear understanding of the import of that resolution. Unconsciously (or half consciously) the new group leans towards the views of the otzovists, which are *incompatible* with that resolution. In its pamphlet the new group does not give a popular exposition of all the propositions contained in that resolution, but only of a part of them, without grasping (perhaps even without noticing the importance of) the other part. The principal factors, which caused the Revolution of 1905, continue to operate—states the resolution. The new revolutionary crisis is maturing (clause “f”). The goal of the struggle remains—the overthrow of tsarism and the establishment of a republic; the proletariat must play the “leading” role in the struggle and must strive for the “conquest of political power” (clauses “e” and l.). The state of the world market and of world politics renders the “international situation more and more revolutionary” (clause “g”). *These* propositions are explained in a popular manner in the new platform and *to that extent* it goes hand in hand with the Bolsheviks and with the Party, *to that extent* it expresses correct views and performs useful work.

But the trouble is that we have to lay stress on this “to that extent.” The trouble is that the new group *does not understand* the *other* points in the same resolution, does not grasp their connection with the remaining points, and, especially, it does not see their *connection* with that irreconcilable attitude to otzovism which is characteristic of the Bolsheviks and which is not characteristic of this group.

Revolution has again become inevitable. The revolution must again strive for and achieve the overthrow of tsarism—say the authors of the new platform. Quite right. But that is not all that a *present-day* revolutionary Social-Democrat must know and bear in mind. He must be able to comprehend that this revolution is coming to us in a new way and that we must march towards it in a new way (in a different way than hitherto; not only in the way

we did before; not only with those weapons and means of struggle we used before); that the autocracy itself is not the same as it was before. It is just this point that the advocates of otzovism refuse to see. They persistently want to remain one-sided and *thereby*, in spite of themselves, consciously or unconsciously, they are *rendering a service* to the opportunists and liquidators; by their one-sidedness in one direction they are supporting one-sidedness in another direction.

The autocracy has entered a *new* historical period. It is taking a step towards its transformation into a bourgeois monarchy. The Third Duma represents an alliance with definite classes. The Third Duma is not a casual, but a necessary institution in the system of this new monarchy. Nor is the autocracy's new agrarian policy casual; it is a necessary, a bourgeois-necessary, and necessary because of its bourgeois character, link in the policy of the new tsarism. We are confronted by a *peculiar* historical period with *peculiar* conditions for the birth of a new revolution. It will be impossible to master these peculiar conditions and prepare ourselves for this new revolution if we operate only in the old way, if we do not learn to utilise the Duma tribune itself, etc.

It is this last point that the otzovists cannot grasp. And the defenders of otzovism, who declare it to be a "legitimate shade of opinion" (p. 28 of the pamphlet under review), cannot even now grasp the *connection* this point has with a *whole cycle of ideas*, with the recognition of the peculiarities of the present moment and with the effort to take these peculiarities into account in determining tactics. They repeat that we are passing through an "inter-revolutionary period" (p. 29), that "the present situation" represents a "transitional situation between two waves of the democratic revolution" (p. 32); but they cannot understand what it is that is *peculiar* in this "*transitional situation*." However, unless we do understand this *transition* it will be impossible to overcome it with advantage to the revolution, it will be impossible for us to prepare for the new revolution, impossible to *pass on* to the second wave of the revolution! For the preparations for the new revolution cannot be restricted to reiterating the fact that it is inevitable; preparation must consist in devising such forms of propaganda,

agitation and organisation as will take account of the *peculiarities of this transitional situation*.

Here is an instance of how people talk about the *transitional* situation without understanding what this *transition* actually is.

"That there is no real constitution in Russia and that the Duma is only its phantom, devoid of power and importance, is not only well known to the masses of the population by dint of experience, it is now becoming obvious to the whole world." (P. 11.)

Compare this with the estimate of the Third Duma given in the December resolution:

"The alliance between tsarism, the Black Hundred landlords and the upper strata of the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie has been publicly consolidated and recognised by the *coup d'état* of June 16 [3] and by the establishment of the Third Duma."

Is it really not "obvious to the whole world" that the authors of the platform did not, after all, understand the resolution, in spite of the fact that for a whole year it was chewed over and over again in the Party press in a thousand ways? And they failed to understand it, of course, not because they are dull-witted, but because they labour under the strong influence of otzovism and of the otzovist cycle of ideas.

Our Third Duma is a Black Hundred-Octobrist Duma. To assert that the Octobrists and the Black Hundreds have no "power and importance" in Russia (as the authors of the platform do in effect) is absurd. The absence of a "real constitution" and the fact that the autocracy retains full power do not in the least preclude the peculiar historical position in which this government is forced to organise a counter-revolutionary alliance of certain classes on a national scale, in openly functioning institutions of national importance, and in which certain classes are organising themselves from below into counter-revolutionary *blocs* which are stretching out their hand to tsarism. If the "alliance" between tsarism and these classes (an alliance which strives to preserve power and revenues for the feudal landlords) is a peculiar form of class rule and of the rule of the tsar and his gang during the present *transition* period, a form created by the bourgeois evolution of the country amidst the conditions of the defeat of the "first wave of

the 'revolution'—*then there can be no talk of utilising the transition period without utilising the Duma tribune.* The peculiar tactics of using the very tribune from which the counter-revolutionaries speak *for* the purpose of preparing the revolution thus becomes *a duty* dictated by the peculiarities of the *entire* historical situation. If, however, the Duma is but the "phantom" of a constitution "devoid of power and importance," then there is really no *new* stage in the development of bourgeois Russia, of the bourgeois monarchy, or in the development of the form of rule of the upper classes, etc.; in that case the otzovists are, of course, correct *in principle*.

Do not imagine that the passage we quoted from the platform was a slip of the pen. In a special chapter, "On the State Duma" (pp. 25-28), we read in the very beginning:

"All the State Dumas have hitherto been institutions devoid of all real power and authority, and did not express the real interrelation of social forces in the country. The government convened them under the pressure of the popular movement in order, on the one hand, to turn the excitement of the masses from the path of direct struggle into peaceful election channels, and, on the other hand, in order to come to terms in these Dumas with those social groups which could support the government in its struggle against the revolution...."

This is a whole tangle of confused ideas or of fragments of ideas. Since the government convened the Dumas in order to come to terms with the counter-revolutionary classes, it follows precisely that the First and Second Dumas had *no* "power and authority" (to help the revolution), whereas the Third Duma *possessed and possesses* power and authority (to help the counter-revolution). The revolutionaries could have (and in certain circumstances should have) refrained from participating in an institution which was powerless to help the revolution. This is indisputable. By bracketing such institutions of the revolutionary period with the Duma of the "inter-revolutionary period" which has the power to help the counter-revolution, the authors of the platform commit a monstrous error. They apply the correct Bolshevik arguments precisely to those cases to which they are really inapplicable! This is exactly what we mean when we say—making a caricature of Bolshevism.

In summing up their "interpretation" of Bolshevism, the authors of the platform have even put in a special clause, e (p. 16), in which this "caricature" of revolutionariness has found, we might say, its classical expression. Here is this clause in full:

"e) Pending the completion of the revolution, no semi-legal or legal methods and means of struggle of the working class, including also participation in the State Duma, can have any independent or decisive importance; they can only serve as a means of gathering and preparing the forces for the direct, revolutionary, open mass struggle."

This implies that *after* the "completion of the revolution" legal methods of struggle, "including" parliamentarism, *may* have independent and decisive importance!

That is wrong. Not even then. The platform of the *Vperyod* group is just nonsense.

Furthermore, it follows that "pending the completion of the revolution" all means of struggle, *except* the legal and semi-legal, *i.e.*, *all the illegal* means of struggle, *may* have independent and decisive importance!

This is wrong. There are certain illegal methods of struggle, which, even *after* the "completion of the revolution" (for example, the illegal propaganda circles) and "pending the completion of the revolution" (for example, the seizure of money from the enemy, or the forcible liberation of the arrested, or the assassination of spies, etc.), cannot "have any independent or decisive importance; they can *only* serve," etc., as in the text of the "*platform*."

To proceed. What "completion of the revolution" is referred to here? Obviously, *not* the completion of the socialist revolution, for then there will be no struggle of the working class, since there will be no classes at all. Obviously then, reference is made to the completion of the *bourgeois-democratic* revolution. Now let us see what the authors of the platform "meant" by *completion* of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Generally speaking, this term may be taken to mean two things. If used in its broad sense, it means the fulfilment of the objective historical tasks of the bourgeois revolution, its "*completion*," *i.e.*,

revolution, the completion of the *entire cycle* of bourgeois revolutions. In this sense the bourgeois-democratic revolution, for example, in France was *completed* only in 1871 (though begun in 1789). But if the term is used in its narrow sense, it means a particular revolution, one of the bourgeois revolutions, one of the "waves," if you like, which batter the old regime but do not destroy it altogether, do not remove the soil that may generate subsequent bourgeois revolutions. In this sense the Revolution of 1848 in Germany was "completed" in 1850 or the 'fifties, but it did not in the least thereby remove the soil for the revolutionary revival in the 'sixties. The Revolution of 1789 in France was "completed," let us say, in 1794, without, however, thereby removing the soil for the revolutions of 1830 and 1848.

No matter how the words of the platform, "pending the completion of the revolution," are interpreted, whether in their wider or their narrower sense, there is no sense in them in either case. Needless to say, it would be altogether absurd to attempt now to determine the tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy for the whole period of the entire cycle of possible bourgeois revolutions in Russia. And as to the revolutionary "wave" of 1905-07, *i.e.*, the first bourgeois revolution in Russia, the platform itself is forced to admit that "it [the autocracy] has beaten back the first wave of the revolution" (p. 12), that we are passing through an "inter-revolutionary" period, a period "between two waves of a democratic revolution."

Now what is the source of this endless and inextricable tangle in the "platform"? It is precisely the fact that the platform diplomatically dissociates itself from otzovism without abandoning the cycle of ideas of otzovism, without correcting its fundamental error and without even noticing it. It is precisely because the *Vperyod*-ists regard otzovism as a "legitimate shade of opinion," *i.e.*, they regard the otzovist shade of the caricature of Bolshevism as a *law*, a model, an unexcelled model. He who has stepped on to this inclined plane irresistibly rolls down and will continue to roll down into the quagmire of inextricable confusion—and he is repeating words and slogans without being able to ponder over

the conditions of their application and the limits of their importance.

Why, for example, did the Bolsheviks in 1906-07 so often oppose the opportunists with the slogan, "the revolution is not over"? Because the objective conditions were such that the completion of the revolution in the narrow sense of that word was out of the question. Take, for instance, the period of the Second Duma—the most revolutionary parliament in the world and probably the most reactionary, autocratic government. There was no direct way out of this except by a *coup d'état* from above, or by an uprising from below. And however much the very wise pedants may now shake their heads, the fact is that no one could say beforehand whether the government's *coup d'état* would be successful, whether it would pass off smoothly, whether or not Nicholas II would break his neck in the attempt. The slogan, "the revolution is not over," had a most vital, immediately important, practically palpable significance, for it *alone* correctly expressed things as they were and whither they were moving by virtue of the objective logic of events. And now that the otzovists themselves recognise the present situation as being "inter-revolutionary," does not the attempt to represent otzovism as a "legitimate shade of the revolutionary wing," "pending the completion of the revolution," betray hopeless confusion?

In order to extricate oneself from this vicious circle of contradictions, one must not play at diplomacy with otzovism, but must cut its ideological basis from under its feet; one must adopt the point of view of the December resolution and think it out to the end. The present inter-revolutionary period cannot be explained away as a mere accident. There is no doubt now that a special stage in the development of the autocracy has set in, in the development of the bourgeois monarchy, bourgeois Black Hundred parliamentarism, the bourgeois policy of tsarism in the rural districts, and that the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie is supporting it all. The present period is undoubtedly a *transition* period "between two waves of the revolution," but in order to prepare for the second revolution we must master the peculiarities of this transition, we must be able to adapt our tactics and organisation to

this difficult, hard, obscure transition forced on us by the whole course of the "campaign." The utilisation of the Duma tribune, as well as of any of the other legal possibilities, is one of the humble methods of struggle which do not result in anything "striking." But the transition period is transitory precisely because its specific task is to prepare and rally the *forces*, and not to bring them into immediate and decisive action. To know how to organise this work, which is devoid of outward glamour, to know how to utilise for this purpose all those semi-legal institutions which are peculiar to the period of the Black Hundred-Octobrist Duma, to know how to maintain *even on this basis* all the traditions of revolutionary Social-Democracy, all the slogans of its recent heroic past, the entire spirit of its work, its irreconcilability with opportunism and reformism—such is the *task of the Party*, such is the task of the present moment.

We have examined the new platform's first deviation from the tactics expounded in the resolution of the December Conference of 1908. We have seen that this is a deviation towards otzovist ideas, ideas that have nothing in common either with the Marxian analysis of the present situation or with the fundamental premises of revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics in general. Now we must examine the second original feature of the new platform.

This feature is—the task, proclaimed by the new group, of "creating" and "disseminating among the masses a new, proletarian" culture: "of developing proletarian science, of strengthening genuine comradely relations among the proletarians, of developing a proletarian philosophy, of directing art towards proletarian aspirations and experience." (P. 17.)

Here you have an example of that naive diplomacy which in the new programme serves to cover up the essence of the matter! Is it not really naive to insert "of strengthening genuine comradely relations" *between* "science" and "philosophy"? The new group introduces *into the platform* its supposed grievances, its accusation against the other groups (namely, against the orthodox Bolsheviks in the first place) that *they* have broken "genuine comradely relations." Such is precisely the *real* content of this amusing clause.

Here "proletarian science" also looks "sad and out of place."



First of all, we know now of only one proletarian science—Marxism. For some reason the authors of the platform systematically avoid this, the only precise term, and everywhere use the words “scientific socialism.” (Pp. 13, 15, 16, 20, 21.) It is common knowledge that even outright opponents of Marxism lay claim to this latter term in Russia. In the second place, if the task of developing “proletarian science” is introduced into the platform, it is necessary to state plainly just what contemporary, ideological, theoretical struggle is meant here and whose side the authors of the platform take. Silence on this point is a naive subterfuge, for the *essence of the matter* is obvious to everyone who is acquainted with the literature of Social-Democracy in 1908-09. In *our* time a struggle between the Marxists and the Machists has come to the fore and is being waged in the domain of science, philosophy and art. It is ridiculous, to say the least, to shut one’s eyes to this commonly known fact. “Platforms” should be written not in order to gloss over differences but in order to explain them.

Our authors clumsily give themselves away by the above-quoted passage of the platform. Everyone knows that it is precisely *Machism* that is *really* implied by the term “proletarian philosophy”—and every intelligent Social-Democrat will at once decipher the “new” *pseudonym*. It was no use inventing this pseudonym, no use trying to hide behind it. In fact, the most influential literary nucleus of the new group is Machian, and it regards non-Machian philosophy as non-“proletarian.”

If they wanted to talk about it in the platform, they should have said: the new group unites those who will fight against the non-“proletarian,” *i.e.*, non-Machian, theories in philosophy and art. That would have been a straightforward, truthful and open declaration of a well-known *ideological* trend, an open challenge to the other tendencies. When an ideological struggle is held to be of great importance for the Party, one does not hide but comes out with an open declaration of war.

And we shall call upon everyone to give a definite, clear answer to the disguised declaration of a philosophical struggle against Marxism in the platform. *In reality*, all the phrases about “proletarian culture” are intended precisely to cloak the *struggle against*

*Marxism.* The "original" feature of the new group is that it has introduced *philosophy* into the Party platform without stating openly *what* tendency in philosophy it advocates.

Incidentally, it would be incorrect to say that the real content of the words of the platform quoted above is wholly negative. They have a certain positive content. This positive content can be expressed in one word: M. Gorky.

Indeed, there is no need to conceal the fact already noised abroad by the bourgeois press (which has distorted and twisted it), namely, that M. Gorky is one of the adherents of the new group. And Gorky is undoubtedly the greatest representative of *proletarian* art, who has done a great deal for this art and is capable of doing still more in the future. Any faction of the Social-Democratic Party would be justly proud of having Gorky as member, but to introduce "proletarian art" into the *platform* on this ground means giving this platform a certificate of poverty, means reducing one's group to a literary *circle*, which exposes itself as being precisely "authoritarian." . . . The authors of the platform say a great deal against recognising authorities, without explaining directly what it is all about. The fact is that they regard the Bolsheviks' defence of materialism in philosophy and their struggle against otzovism as the undertaking of individual "authorities" (a slight hint at an important affair!) whom the enemies of Machism "trust blindly." Such sallies, of course, are quite childish. But it is precisely the *Vperyod*-ists who treat authorities badly. Gorky is an authority in the domain of proletarian art—that is beyond dispute. The attempt to "utilise" (in the ideological sense, of course) *this* authority to strengthen Machism and otzovism is an *example* of how not to treat *authorities*. In the field of proletarian art M. Gorky is an enormous asset in spite of his sympathies for Machism and otzovism. But a platform which sets up within the Party a separate group of otzovists and Machists and advances the development of alleged "proletarian" art as a special task of the group is a *minus* in the development of the Social-Democratic proletarian movement; because this platform wants to consolidate and utilise the very features in the activities of a great authority which represent his weak side and are a negative quan-

tity in the enormous sum of useful service he has rendered the proletariat.

March 1910.

## II. THE "UNITY CRISIS" IN OUR PARTY

Upon reading this title, some reader perhaps will not, at first, believe his own eyes. "As if that were wanting! What crises have we not had in our Party—and suddenly a new crisis, a *unity* crisis!"

The expression which sounds so strange is borrowed by me from Liebknecht. He used it in 1875 in his letter of May 3 to Engels, giving an account of the amalgamation of the Lassalleans and the Eisenachers. Marx and Engels thought at that time that no good would come of that amalgamation. Liebknecht brushed aside their fears and asserted that the German Social-Democratic Party, which had successfully survived all sorts of crises, would also survive the "unity crisis." (See Gustav Mayer, *Johann Baptist von Schweitzer und die Sozialdemokratie*, Jena, 1909, S. 424.)

There can be no doubt whatever that our Party too, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, will successfully survive its unity crisis. That it is now passing through such a crisis is obvious to everyone who is acquainted with the decisions of the plenary meeting of the Central Committee and with the events that followed the plenum. If one were to judge by the resolutions of the plenum, the amalgamation might seem to be most complete and fully accomplished. But if one were to judge by what is taking place now in the beginning of May 1910, if one were to judge by the determined struggle the central organ is waging against *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* which is published by the liquidators, if one were to judge by the controversy that has flared up between Plekhanov and the other Party Mensheviks, on the one hand, and the *Golos* group, on the other, or by the extremely abusive writings of the *Vperyod* group directed against the central organ (see the recent leaflet of the group, entitled *To the Bolshevik Comrades*), then *all* unity might easily appear to an outsider to be a mere phantom.

The avowed enemies of the Party are rejoicing. The *Vperyod*-ists, who follow and cover up otzovism, indulge in unbridled abuse. Still more bitter is the abuse levelled by the leaders of the liquidators, Axelrod, Martynov, Martov, Potresov and others, in their *Necessary Supplement to Plekhanov's Diaries*. The "conciliators" are distressed, they complain and utter helpless phrases. (See the resolution passed on April 30 [17], 1910, by the Vienna Social-Democratic Party Club, which shares the viewpoint of Trotsky.)

But the most important and fundamental question as to the *reasons* our Party amalgamation is developing in this and in no other way, why the (seemingly) complete unity at the plenum is now replaced by (seemingly) utter disunity, and also the question of what the trend of the further development of the Party *should* be in consequence of the "relation of forces" inside and outside our Party—these fundamental questions are not answered either by the liquidators (*Golos* group) or by the otzovists (*Vperyod* group) or the conciliators (Trotsky and the "Viennese").

Curses and phrases are no answer.

### 1. *Two Views on Unity*

With touching unanimity the liquidators and the otzovists are roundly cursing the Bolsheviks (the liquidators are also cursing Plekhanov). The Bolsheviks are to blame, the Bolshevik centre is to blame, the "individualistic" habits of Lenin and Plekhanov (p. 15 of the *Necessary Supplement*) are to blame as well as the "irresponsible group" of "former members of the Bolshevik centre" (see the leaflet of the *Vperyod* group). In this respect the liquidators and the otzovists are entirely at one; their *bloc* against orthodox Bolshevism (a *bloc* which *more than once* characterised the struggle at the plenum, to which I refer particularly later on) is an indisputable fact; the representatives of two extreme tendencies, both of them equally expressing their subordination to bourgeois ideas, both of them equally anti-Party, are entirely at one in their internal Party policies, in their struggle against the Bolshe-

viks and in proclaiming the central organ to be "Bolshevik." But the strongest curses of Axelrod and Alexinsky only cover up their complete failure to understand the meaning and importance of Party unity. Trotsky's (the Viennese) resolution only differs outwardly from the "effusions" of Axelrod and Alexinsky. It is drafted very "cautiously" and lays claim to "super-factional" fairness. But what is its meaning? The "Bolshevik leaders" are to blame for everything—this is the same "philosophy of history" as that advocated by Axelrod and Alexinsky.

The very first paragraph of the Vienna resolution states:

"...the representatives of all factions and trends... by their decision" (at the plenum) "consciously and deliberately assumed responsibility for carrying out the adopted resolutions *in the present conditions, in co-operation with the given persons, groups and institutions.*"

This refers to "conflicts in the central organ."\* Who is "responsible for carrying out the resolutions" of the plenum in the central organ? Obviously the majority of the central organ, *i.e.*, the Bolsheviks and the Poles; it is they who are responsible for carrying out the resolutions of the plenum—"in co-operation with the given persons," *i.e.*, with the *Golos* and the *Vperyod* groups.

What does the principal resolution of the plenum say in that part of it which deals with the most "vexed" problems of our Party, with questions which were most disputable before the plenum and which should have become least disputable after the plenum?

It says that the bourgeois *influence over the proletariat manifests itself*, on the one hand, in the renunciation of the illegal Social-Democratic Party and in belittling its role and importance, etc., and, on the other hand, in the renunciation of the Duma work of Social-Democracy as well as the utilisation of the legal possibilities, the failure to grasp the importance of either, etc.

Now what is the meaning of this resolution?

*Does it mean that the Golos-ites* should have sincerely and irrevocably renounced the negation of the illegal Party, ceased belittling it, etc., that they should have recognised this as a deviation, that they should have got rid of it, and done positive work in a spirit hostile to this deviation; that the *Vperyod-ists* should have sincerely and irrevocably renounced the negation of

Duma work and of legal possibilities, etc.; that the majority of the central organ should in every way have enlisted the "co-operation" of the *Golos*-ites and *Vperyod*-ists *on condition* that they sincerely, consistently and irrevocably renounced the "deviation," described in detail in the resolution of the plenum?

Or does the resolution mean that the majority of the central organ is responsible for carrying out the resolution (on the overcoming of the liquidationist and otzovist deviations) "*in co-operation with the given*" *Golos*-ites, who *continue* as heretofore, and even more vulgarly, to defend liquidationism, or with the given *Vperyod*-ists, who *continue* as heretofore, and even more vulgarly, to defend the legitimacy of otzovism, ultimatumism, etc.?

This question need only be put to enable one to see how hollow are the ringing phrases in Trotsky's resolution, to see how *in reality* they serve to defend the very position held by Axelrod and Co., and Alexinsky and Co.

In the very first words of his resolution Trotsky expressed the full spirit of the worst kind of conciliationism, "conciliationism" in quotation marks, conciliationism which smacks of narrow circles and philistinism, which, instead of dealing with the given line of policy, the given spirit, the given ideological and political content of Party work, deals with "given persons."

Now that is precisely where the enormous difference lies between the genuine Party spirit, which consists in purging the Party of liquidationism and otzovism, and the "conciliationism" of Trotsky and Co., which really renders a most faithful service to the liquidators and the otzovists, and therefore constitutes an evil all the more dangerous to the Party, the more cunningly, artfully and floridly it cloaks itself with professedly Party, professedly anti-factional declamations.

Indeed, what is it that is given us as the task of the Party?

Is it "given persons, groups and institutions" that are "given" us and that are to be "reconciled" irrespective of their policy, irrespective of the content of their work, irrespective of their attitude towards liquidationism and otzovism?

Or are we given a definite Party line, the ideological and political direction and content of our entire work, as well as the task of purging this work of liquidationism and otzovism—a task that must be carried out irrespective of “persons, groups and institutions,” in spite of the opposition of “persons, institutions and groups,” which disagree with that policy or do not carry it out?

Two views are possible on the meaning of and conditions for the accomplishment of any kind of Party unity. It is extremely important to grasp the difference between these views, for, in the course of development of our “unity crisis,” they become entangled and confused and it is impossible to orientate ourselves in this crisis unless we draw a sharp line between the two views.

One view on unity may place in the forefront the “reconciliation” of “given persons, groups and institutions.” The identity of their views on Party work, on the policy of that work, is a matter of secondary importance. Differences of opinion must be hushed up, their causes, their significance, their objective conditions should not be elucidated. The principal thing is to “reconcile” persons and groups. If they do not agree upon the carrying out of a common policy, that policy must be interpreted in such a way as to be acceptable to all. Live and let live. This is philistine “conciliationism,” which inevitably leads to narrow-circle diplomacy. To “stop up” the source of disagreement, to hush it up, to “adjust” “conflicts” at all costs, to neutralise the conflicting trends—it is to this that the main attention of such “conciliationism” is directed. In circumstances in which the illegal Party requires a base abroad for its operations, this narrow-circle diplomacy opens wide the doors to “persons, groups and institutions” which play the part of “honest brokers” in all kinds of attempts at “conciliation” and “neutralisation.”

This is what Martov relates, in *Golos*, No. 19-20, of such an attempt at the plenum:

“The Mensheviks, *Pravda*-ists and Bundists proposed such a composition of the central organ as would ensure the ‘neutralisation’ of the two opposite tendencies in the Party ideology, and would give no definite majority to any of them, thus forcing

the Party organ to work out, in relation to each essential question, that *middle course* which might unite the majority of Party workers."

As is known, the proposal of the Mensheviks was not adopted. Trotsky, who came forward as a candidate for the central organ in the capacity of *neutraliser*, was defeated. The candidature of a Bundist for the same post (the Mensheviks in their speeches proposed such a candidate) was not even put to the vote.

Such is the *actual* role played by those "conciliators," in the bad sense of the word, who wrote the Vienna resolution and whose views are expressed in Yonov's article in No. 4 of *Echoes of the Bund*, which I have just received. The Mensheviks *did not venture* to propose a central organ with a majority of *their own* following, although, as is seen from Martov's argument above quoted, they recognised the existence of *two opposite trends* in the Party. The Mensheviks did not even think of proposing a central organ with a majority of *their* following. They did not even attempt to insist on a central organ with any definite trend at all (so obvious was the absence of any trend among the Mensheviks at the plenum—they were simply required and simply expected to make a sincere and consistent renunciation of liquidationism). The Mensheviks insisted on the "neutralisation" of the central organ and proposed as "neutralisers" either a Bundist or Trotsky. The Bundist or Trotsky was to play the part of matchmaker, who would have to "unite in wedlock" "given persons, groups and institutions," irrespective of whether any of the sides had renounced liquidationism or not.

This standpoint of a matchmaker constitutes the entire "ideological basis" of Trotsky's and Yonov's conciliationism. When they complain and weep over the failure to achieve unity, it must be taken *cum grano salis*.<sup>1</sup> It must be taken to mean that the match-making failed. The "failure" of the hopes of unity cherished by Trotsky and Yonov, hopes of unity with "*given persons, groups and institutions*" irrespective of their attitude to liquidationism, means only the failure of the matchmakers, the falsity, the hopelessness,

<sup>1</sup> With a grain of salt —Ed



the wretchedness of the point of view of a matchmaker, but it does not at all signify the failure of Party unity.

There is another view on this unity, namely, that a number of profound objective causes, long ago, independently of the manner in which the "given persons, groups and institutions" (submitted to the plenum and at the plenum) were constituted, began to bring about and are steadily continuing to bring about changes in the two old and principal Russian factions among the Social-Democrats, changes that create—sometimes in spite of the will and even consciousness of some one of the "given persons, groups and institutions"—ideological and organisational bases for unity. These objective causes are rooted in the peculiarities of the present period of bourgeois development in Russia, the period of bourgeois counter-revolution and attempts by the autocracy to reorganise itself on the model of a bourgeois monarchy. These objective conditions simultaneously cause changes that are indissolubly linked up with one another, changes in the character of the labour movement, in the composition, type and features of the proletarian Social-Democratic vanguard, as well as changes in the ideological and political tasks of the Social-Democratic movement. Therefore, that bourgeois influence over the proletariat, which creates liquidationism (=semi-liberalism which likes to be regarded as a part of Social-Democracy) and otzovism (=semi-anarchism, which likes to be regarded as a part of Social-Democracy) is not an accident, nor evil intention, stupidity or error on the part of some individual, but the inevitable result of the action of these objective causes, and the superstructure of the entire labour movement of present-day Russia, which is inseparable from the "basis." The realisation of the danger of the un-Social-Democratic nature and of the harmfulness to the labour movement of both these deviations brings about a *rapprochement* between the elements of various factions and paves the way to Party unity "in spite of all obstacles."

From this point of view the unification of the Party may proceed slowly, with difficulties, vacillations, waverings, relapses, but it cannot but proceed. From this point of view the process of unification does not necessarily take place among the "given persons, groups and institutions," but irrespective of the given persons, sub-

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ordinating them to itself, rejecting those of the "given" persons who do not understand or who do not want to understand the requirements of objective development, putting forward and attracting new persons, who do not belong to the "given" set, effecting changes, reshufflings and regroupings within the old factions, tendencies, divisions. From this point of view, unity is inseparable from its ideological foundation, it can grow only on the basis of an ideological *rapprochement*, it is connected with the appearance, development and growth of such deviations as liquidationism and otzovism, not by the casual ties of this or that controversy or this or that literary struggle, but by an internal, indissoluble tie such as that which binds cause and effect.

## 2. *"The Struggle on Two Fronts" and the Overcoming of Deviations*

Such are the two fundamentally different and radically divergent views on the nature and significance of our Party unity.

The question now is, which of these views forms the basis of the plenum resolution? Whoever wishes to ponder over it will perceive that it is the second view that forms *the basis*, but in some passages the resolution clearly reveals traces of partial "amendments," in the spirit of the first view. However, these "amendments," while *worsening* the resolution, *in no way remove its basis*, its principal content, which is thoroughly imbued with the second point of view.

In order to demonstrate that this is so, that the "amendments" in the spirit of narrow-circle diplomacy are really only partial amendments, that they do not alter the essence of the matter and the principle underlying the resolution, I shall deal with certain points and certain passages in the resolution on the state of affairs in the Party, which have already been dealt with in the Party press. I shall start from the end.

After accusing the "leaders of the old factions" of doing everything to prevent unity, of having behaved at the plenum, also, in such a way that "every inch of ground had to be taken from them by storm," Yonov writes:

"Comrade Lenin did not want 'to overcome the dangerous deviations' by means of 'broadening and deepening Social-Democratic activities.' He strove quite energetically to put the theory of the 'struggle on two fronts' in the centre of Party activities. He did not even think of abolishing 'the state of siege' within the Party." (P. 22, art. 1.)

This refers to §4, clause "b," of the resolution on the situation in the Party. The draft of this resolution was submitted to the Central Committee by myself, and the clause in question was altered by the plenum itself after the commission had finished its work; it was altered on the motion of Trotsky, against whom I fought without success. In this clause I had, if not literally the words "struggle on two fronts," at all events, words to that effect. The words "overcoming by means of broadening and deepening" were inserted on Trotsky's motion. I am very glad that Comrade Yonov, by telling of my struggle against this proposal, gives me an opportunity to express my opinion on the meaning of the "amendment."

Nothing at the plenum aroused more furious—and often comical—indignation than the idea of a "struggle on two fronts." The very mention of this greatly excited both the *Vperyod*-ists and the Mensheviks. This indignation can be fully explained on historical grounds, for the Bolsheviks have *actually* carried on, from August 1908 to January 1910,\* a struggle on two fronts, *i.e.*, a struggle against the liquidators and the otzovists. This indignation was comical because those who were angry with the Bolsheviks were thereby only proving their own guilt, showing that they were still feeling hurt by every condemnation of liquidationism and otzovism. A guilty conscience is never at ease.

Trotsky's motion to substitute "overcoming by means of broadening and deepening" for the struggle on two fronts met with the hearty support of the Mensheviks and the *Vperyod*-ists.

And now Yonov and *Pravda* and the Vienna resolution and *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* are all rejoicing over that "victory." But the question arises: have they, by deleting from this clause the words about the struggle on two fronts, eliminated from the resolution the recognition of the need for that struggle? *Not at all*, for since the "deviations," their "danger," and the necessity of "explaining" that danger are recognised, and since it is also recognised

that these deviations are a "manifestation of bourgeois influence over the proletariat"—all this *in effect* means precisely the recognition of the struggle on two fronts. In one passage an "unpleasant<sup>2</sup>" term (unpleasant to one or other of *their* friends) was altered, but the basic idea was left intact! The result was only that one part of one clause was confused, watered down and changed for the worse by a phrase.

Indeed, it is nothing but a phrase and helpless evasion when the given section speaks of overcoming by means of broadening and deepening the work. There is no clear idea in this. The work must certainly be broadened and deepened at all times; the entire *third* section of the resolution deals with this in detail before it passes on to the specific "ideological and political tasks," which are not always or absolutely imperative, but are generated by the specific conditions of the particular period. Section 4 deals only with these special tasks, and in the preamble to all of its three points it is directly stated that "in their turn" these ideological and political tasks "*have come to the fore.*"

What is the result? Mere nonsense—as if the task of broadening and deepening the work has *also* come to the fore in its turn! As if there *could* be such a historical "turn," when *this* task is not on the order of the day!

Now, in what way is it possible to overcome deviations by *broadening* and *deepening* Social-Democratic work? Any broadening and deepening of our work inevitably gives rise to the question of how it should be broadened and deepened; if liquidationism and otzovism are not accidents, but currents generated by specific social conditions, then they can penetrate into any methods for the broadening and deepening of the work. It is possible to broaden and deepen the work in the spirit of liquidationism—this is being done for instance by *Nasha Zarya*<sup>1</sup> and *Vozrozhdeniye*<sup>2</sup>; it is also possible to do it in the spirit of otzovism. On the other hand, the overcoming of deviations, "overcoming" in the real sense of the word, inevitably diverts certain forces, time and energy from the immediate task of broadening and deepening proper Social-

<sup>1</sup> *Our Dawn*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Regeneration*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

Democratic work. The same Yonov, for instance, writes on the same page of his article:

"The plenum is over. Its participants have departed. The Central Committee in organising its work has to overcome incredible difficulties, among which not the least is the behaviour of the so-called" (only "so-called," Comrade Yonov, not real, genuine ones?) "liquidators whose existence Comrade Martov so persistently denied."

Here you have material—little, but characteristic material—which illustrates how empty Trotsky's and Yonov's phrases are. The overcoming of the liquidationist activities of Mikhail, Yury and Co. diverted the time and energy of the Central Committee from the task of broadening and deepening genuinely Social-Democratic work. Were it not for the conduct of Mikhail, Yury and Co., were it not for the liquidationism among those whom we mistakenly continue to regard as our comrades, the broadening and deepening of Social-Democratic work would have proceeded more successfully, for then internal strife would not have diverted the forces of the Party. Consequently, if we take the broadening and deepening of Social-Democratic work to mean the immediate furthering of agitation, propaganda and economic struggle, etc., in a genuinely Social-Democratic spirit, then the overcoming of Social-Democrats' deviations from Social-Democracy is, in regard to this work, a minus, a subtraction, so to speak, from the "positive activity," and therefore the phrase about overcoming deviations *by means of* broadening, etc., is meaningless.

In reality this phrase expresses a vague desire, a pious, innocent wish that there should be less internal strife among the Social-Democrats! This phrase reflects nothing but this pious wish; it is a *sigh* of the so-called conciliators: Oh, if there were only less struggle against liquidationism and otzovism!

The political importance of such "sighing" is nil, less than nil. If there are people in the Party who profit by "persistently denying" the existence of liquidators (and otzovists), they will take advantage of the "sigh" of the "conciliators" to cover up the evil. That is precisely what *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* does. Hence the defenders of such well-meaning and hollow phrases in the resolution are only *so-called* "conciliators." In reality, they are the

abettors of the liquidators and otzovists, in reality, they do not deepen Social-Democratic work; they actually strengthen deviations from it, they strengthen the evil by temporarily concealing it and thereby rendering the cure more difficult.

In order to illustrate to Comrade Yonov the significance of this evil, I shall remind him of a certain passage in his article in *Discussionny Listok*, No. 1. Comrade Yonov very aptly compared liquidationism and otzovism to a *benign ulcer* which "in the process of swelling draws to itself all the noxious elements from the entire organism, thus contributing to recovery."

That's just it. The process of swelling, which draws out of the organism the "noxious elements," leads to recovery. And that which hampers the purification of the organism from such elements is harmful to it. Let Comrade Yonov ponder over this useful idea of Comrade Yonov.<sup>1</sup>

#### 6. *The Group of Independent-Legalists*

Now let us proceed to clarify the events following the plenum. To this question Trotsky and Yonov give a uniform and simple answer. The Vienna resolution reads: "Neither in the external conditions of political life, nor in the internal relations of our Party *after the plenum*, did any real change occur that might hinder the work of building up the Party. . . ." Factional relapse, the heritage of factional relations not yet lived down—and nothing more.

Yonov supplies the same explanations "personified."

"The plenum is over. Its participants have departed. . . . The leaders of the old factions found themselves at liberty and emancipated themselves from all outside influences and pressure. Moreover, they received considerable reinforcements: for some of them—in the person of Comrade Plekhanov, who of late has been ardently advocating that the Party be declared in a state of war; for others—in the person of sixteen 'old Party members, well known to the editorial board of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*.'" (See No. 19-20, "Open Letter.") "Under these conditions, how could one refrain from throwing oneself into the fray? And so they resumed the old 'business' of mutual extermination." (*Echoes of the Bund*, No. 4, p. 22.)

<sup>1</sup> Sections 3, 4 and 5 (see *Collected Works*, Russian ed., Vol. XIV, pp. 308-22) of this article are omitted here owing to lack of space. They contain concrete proofs and instances in support of the fundamental ideas of the article as set out in sections 1 and 2.—*Ed.*

The factionalists received "reinforcements" and another fight ensued—that is all. True, the "reinforcements" for the Bolsheviks came in the person of a Party Menshevik,<sup>1</sup> Plekhanov; he "arrived" to "reinforce" the war on the liquidators, but that is immaterial to Yonov. Yonov apparently does not like Plekhanov's polemics against Potresov and Comrade Y. (who proposed "to dissolve everything"), etc. Of course, he has the right to censure these polemics. But how can you characterise it as "declaring the *Party* in a state of war"? War upon the *liquidators* means declaring the *Party* in a state of war—let us remember Comrade Yonov's "philosophy."

The reinforcements for the Mensheviks abroad came in the persons of the Russian Mensheviks. But this circumstance does not make Comrade Yonov think in the least.

The practical conclusion to be drawn from the "estimation of the present situation" given by Trotsky and Yonov is obvious. Nothing extraordinary occurred. Simply a factional wrangle. Install new neutralisers and the trick is done. Everything is explained from the standpoint of narrow-circle diplomacy. All the practical prescriptions are nothing but narrow-circle diplomacy. There are the people who "rushed into battle" and there are those who desire to "reconcile." Now strike out the reference to "foundation" from one passage, add the name of So-and-so to be included in the "institution" in another passage, "give in" to the legalists in regard to the methods of convening the conference in another passage. . . . It is the old but ever new story of the narrow-circle spirit prevailing abroad.

Our view of what took place after the plenum is different.

Having succeeded in getting the resolutions adopted unanimously, and having eliminated *all* the "squabbling" accusations, the plenum forced the liquidators to the wall. It is no longer possible to hide behind squabbles, it is no longer possible to refer to obduracy and "mechanical suppression" (or the other version: "special defensive measures," "martial law," "state of siege," etc.). It is

\* <sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, a Menshevik who supported the maintenance of the underground Party.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

now possible to leave the Party only on the grounds of liquidationism (just as the *Vperyod*-ists can abandon it only on the grounds of otzovism and their anti-Marxian philosophy).

Forced to the wall, the liquidators have had to show their true colours. Their Russian centre—it matters not whether it is a formal or an informal, a semi-legal (Mikhail and Co.) or entirely legal centre (Potresov and Co.)—*refused* to respond to the call to return to the Party. The Russian legalist-liquidators have finally broken with the Party and have united in a group of *Independent Socialists* (independent of socialism and dependent on liberalism, of course). The answer of Mikhail and Co., on the one hand, and the writings of *Nasha Zarya* and *Vozrozhdeniye*, on the other, mark precisely the consolidation of the anti-Party circles of “Social-Democrats” (to be more exact—quasi-Social-Democrats) into the group of *Independent Socialists*. Therefore the “conciliatory” efforts of Trotsky and Yonov are *now* ridiculous and miserable. These efforts can only be explained by their complete failure to understand what is taking place. They are harmless now, for there is no one behind them save the narrow-circle diplomats abroad, and nothing but ignorance and lack of intelligence in some out-of-the-way places.

The conciliators *à la* Trotsky and Yonov mistook the special conditions which allowed conciliationist diplomacy to blossom forth at the plenum for the general conditions of present-day Party life. They made a mistake in having conceived the diplomacy—which played its part at the plenum *owing* to the presence of conditions that had generated a *deep* striving for conciliation (*i.e.*, for Party unity) in both of the principal factions—as an aim in itself, as a lasting instrument in the game between “*given persons, groups and institutions.*”

Certainly there was scope for diplomacy at the plenum, for it was necessary to secure the Party unity of Party Bolsheviks and Party Mensheviks; and this was impossible without concessions, without compromise. In determining the measure of such concessions the “honest brokers” inevitably came to the front—inevitably, because for the Party Mensheviks and Party Bolsheviks the question of the measure of the concessions was a secondary one, so long



as the fundamental base of the principles of such unity as a whole remained intact. The "conciliators" *à la* Trotsky and Yonov—having pushed their way to the front of the plenum, and having obtained the opportunity to play their part as "neutralisers" and "judges" in the matter of eliminating squabbles, in satisfying "claims" against the Bolshevik centre—imagined that as long as the "given persons, groups and institutions" existed they could always play that part. An amusing delusion. Brokers are needed when it is necessary to determine the measure of concessions for obtaining unanimity. The measure of concessions must be determined when there is an obvious common basis of principles for unity. The question as to who was to join this amalgamation after all the concessions had been made remained open at that time; for in principle the provisional assumption that all the Social-Democrats would want to enter the Party, that all the Mensheviks would want loyally to carry out the anti-liquidationist resolutions, and that all the *Vperyod*-ists would want to do the same in regard to the anti-otzovist resolution, was inevitable.

Now, however, brokers are not required; there is no place for them, because the question of the measure of the concessions to be made does not arise. And the question of the measure of the concessions to be made does not arise because there is no question of making any concessions whatever. All the concessions (and even excessive ones) were made at the plenum. Now it is exclusively a question as to what, in principle, our position must be in the struggle against liquidationism, not against liquidationism in general, but against a definite group of liquidator-independents, the group of Mikhail and Co., the group of Potresov and Co. Should Trotsky and Yonov take it into their heads to "reconcile" the Party with the given persons, groups and institutions, then we and all Party Bolsheviks and all Party Mensheviks would regard them simply as traitors to the Party, and nothing more.

The conciliator-diplomats were "strong" at the plenum exclusively because and in so far as both the Party Bolsheviks and the Party Mensheviks wanted peace and subordinated the question of the conditions of peace to the question of the anti-liquidationist and the anti-otzovist tactics of the Party. I, for instance, considered

the concessions excessive and fought over the extent of these concessions (this is hinted at by *Golos* in No. 19-20 and is openly stated by Yonov). But I was then and would now be prepared to reconcile myself even to excessive concessions, provided the line of the Party was not thereby undermined, provided these concessions did not lead to the negation of that line, provided these concessions served as a bridge for turning people from liquidationism and otzovism to the Party. But now that Mikhail and Co. and Potresov and Co. have united and have taken action against the Party and against the plenum, I refuse to engage in any negotiations about any concessions, since it is now the duty of the Party to break with these independents, to fight them resolutely as people who have fully and finally turned liquidators. And I can speak with confidence not only for myself but for *all* the Party Bolsheviks. The Party Mensheviks, through Plekhanov and others, have expressed themselves clearly enough in the same spirit; and since these are the conditions prevailing in the Party, the "conciliator" diplomats *à la* Trotsky and Yonov will either have to abandon their diplomacy or leave the Party and join the independents.

In order to convince oneself that the legalists have definitely formed themselves into a group of Independent Socialists, one has only to review the events after the plenum, to appraise them in essence, and not appraise them merely from the standpoint of the petty history of "conflicts," to which Yonov unnecessarily confines himself.

1) Mikhail, Roman and Yury declare that the (plenum) resolutions as well as the very existence of the Central Committee are harmful. More than two months have elapsed since this fact was published and it has not been refuted. It is obvious that it is true.<sup>1</sup>

2) Sixteen Russian Mensheviks, including at least two of the three mentioned above, and a number of the most prominent

<sup>1</sup> Number 21 of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* has just appeared. On page 16, Martov and Dan confirm the correctness of this fact, when they speak of the "refusal of three comrades" (??) "to join the Central Committee." As is their wont, with wild abuse of "Tyszko-Lenin," they cover up the fact that the group of Mikhail and Co. has finally turned into a group of independents.

Menshevik writers (Cherevanin, Koltsov, etc.), publish in *Golos*, with the approval of the editors, a purely liquidationist manifesto, justifying the Mensheviks withdrawing from the Party.

3) The Menshevik legally published magazine, *Nasha Zarya*, contains a programme article by Mr. Potresov in which it is bluntly stated that "a party in the form of a complete and organised hierarchy of institutions does not exist" (No. 2, page 61), that it is impossible to wind up "what in reality no longer exists as an organised body." (*Ibid.*) Among the contributors to this journal are Cherevanin, Koltsov, Martynov, Avgustovsky, Maslov, Martov—the same L. Martov who is capable of occupying a place in the "organised hierarchy of institutions" of the illegal Party which has a centre similar to that of an "organised body," and at the same time of belonging to the legal group, which with the gracious permission of Stolypin declares this illegal Party to be non-existent.

4) In the popular Menshevik magazine *Vozrozhdeniye* (No. 5, April 12 [March 30], 1910), run by the *very same* staff, an unsigned, i.e., editorial, article praises the above-mentioned article by Mr. Potresov in *Nasha Zarya* and adds, after quoting the same passage quoted by me above:

"There is nothing to wind up and—we on our part" (*i.e.*, the editors of *Vozrozhdeniye*) "would add—the dream of re-establishing this hierarchy in its old underground form is simply a harmful reactionary utopia, which indicates the loss of political intuition by the representatives of a party which at one time was the most realistic of all." (P. 51)

Anyone who regards all these facts as accidental apparently does not want to see the truth. Anyone who intends to explain these facts as being the result of "a relapse into factionalism" is lulling himself with a phrase. What have factionalism and the factional struggle to do with it, since the group of Mikhail and Co. and the group of Potresov and Co. have been standing aside from it for a long time. No, for one who does not purposely want to shut his eyes no doubts are possible here. The plenum removed all obstacles (real or imaginary) to the return of the Party legalists to the Party, it removed all obstacles in the way of building up

an illegal Party, taking into account the new conditions and new forms of utilising the legal possibilities. Four Menshevik members of the Central Committee and two editors of *Golos* have admitted that *all* obstacles in the way of joint Party work have been removed. The group of Russian legalists *has given its answer to the plenum*. This answer is a *negative* one: we do not want to engage in the restoration and strengthening of the illegal Party, for that is a reactionary utopia.

This answer is a fact of the greatest political importance in the history of the Social-Democratic movement. The group of *Independent Socialists* (independent of socialism) has finally consolidated itself and has finally broken with the Social-Democratic Party. To what extent this group has crystallised itself, whether it consists of one organisation or of a number of separate circles very loosely connected—this we do not know as yet, nor is it important. What matters is that the tendency to form groups independent of the Party—a tendency which has long been prevalent among the Mensheviks—has now brought about a new political formation. And henceforth all Russian Social-Democrats who do not want to deceive themselves must reckon with the fact that this group of independents exists.

In order that the significance of this fact may become clear, let us recall first of all the "Independent Socialists" in France who, in that most progressive bourgeois state, which more than any other state has been purged of all that is old, carried this political trend to its logical conclusion. Millerand, Viviani and Briand belonged to the Socialist Party, but repeatedly acted independently of its decisions, in spite of them, and Millerand's entry into a bourgeois cabinet, ostensibly to save the republic and protect the interests of socialism, brought about his rupture with the Party. The bourgeoisie rewarded the traitors to socialism with ministerial portfolios. The three French renegades continue to call themselves and their group Independent Socialists, they continue to justify their behaviour on the grounds of protecting the interests of the labour movement and social reform.

Bourgeois society cannot, of course, reward our independents quite as rapidly; they start under conditions immeasurably more

backward and they must be satisfied with praises and assistance from the liberal bourgeoisie (which has been supporting the Mensheviks' tendencies towards "independence" for a long time past). But the basic tendency is the same in both cases: being independent of the Socialist Party is justified on the grounds of protecting the interests of the labour movement; "the struggle for legality" (the slogan in *Dan's* formulation, taken up very zealously by the renegade *Vozrozhdeniye*, No. 5, page 7) is proclaimed the slogan of the working class; in reality the bourgeois intellectuals group themselves together (parliamentarians in France, literary men in our country) and act in combination with the liberals; subordination to the Party is rejected; the Party is declared to be insufficiently "realistic" both by Millerand and Co. and by *Vozrozhdeniye* and *Golos*; they characterise the Party as a "dictatorship of closed, underground circles" (*Golos*), and declare that it reduces itself to a narrow, revolutionary association which is harmful to broad progress (Millerand and Co.).

Furthermore, in order to make clear the position of our independents, take the history of the formation of our Russian "Narodni.<sup>1</sup> Socialist Party." This history will help to clarify the position for those who fail to see the kinship between our independents and Millerand and Co. owing to the great difference in the external conditions of their "work." It is common knowledge that our Narodni-Socialists represent the legalist and moderate wing of petty-bourgeois democracy, and I believe none of the Marxists have any doubts about this. At the congress of the Socialist-Revolutionaries at the end of 1905, the Narodni-Socialists came out as the liquidators of the programme, tactics and organisation of the revolutionary party of the petty-bourgeois democrats; they acted in the closest alliance with the Socialist-Revolutionaries in the newspapers of the days of freedom in the autumn of 1905 and in the spring of 1906. They legalised themselves and seceded, forming an independent party in the autumn of 1906, a fact which did not prevent them, during the elections to the Second Duma and in the Second Duma itself, from merging from time to time with the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

<sup>1</sup> "People's"—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

In the autumn of 1906, I happened to write in *Proletary* about the Narodni-Socialists, and I characterised them as "Socialist-Revolutionary Mensheviks." Three and a half years have elapsed since then, and Potresov and Co. have managed to prove to the Party Mensheviks that I was right. It must be acknowledged, however, that even Messrs. Peshekhonov and Co. acted more honestly in a political sense than did Potresov and his group: after a series of political acts which were in effect independent of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, they openly declared themselves to be a separate political party that was independent of the Socialist-Revolutionaries. Certainly, this "honesty" is conditioned, incidentally, by the correlation of forces: Peshekhonov was of the opinion that the Socialist-Revolutionary Party was powerless, and thought that it was he who stood to *lose* by an informal alliance with it; whereas Potresov thinks he stands to *gain* by political Azefism, *i.e.*, by formally continuing to be a Social-Democrat while in reality acting independently of the Social-Democratic Party.

For the present, Messrs. Potresov and Co. deem it most advantageous for themselves to parade under a borrowed name, using the prestige of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in a thievish manner, corrupting it from within, acting not only independently of it but really against it. It is quite likely that our group of independents will try to parade in borrowed plumes as long as possible; it is quite likely that if a severe blow is dealt the Party, after some big raid upon the illegal organisation, or when circumstances prove particularly tempting, such as, for example, the possibility of entering the Duma independently of the Party, the independents themselves will throw off their mask; we cannot foresee all the possible episodes in their political chicanery.

But one thing we know well, and that is that the covert activities of the independents are harmful and fatal to the R.S.D.L.P., the party of the working class, and that we must expose them at all costs, we must expose the independents and declare that all their connections with the Party are broken off. The plenum took a big step forward in this direction. However strange it may appear at first sight, it was precisely the consent (insincere or unconscious) of Martov and Martynov, precisely the maximum, nay excessive,

concessions that were made to them that helped to pierce the ulcer of liquidationism, the ulcer of "independence" in our Party. No honest Social-Democrat, no Party member, whatever faction he may sympathise with, can deny now that the group of Mikhail and Co., the group of Potresov and Co., are *independents*, that in reality they do not recognise the Party, they do not want the Party and they are working against the Party.

The rapidity, or the slowness, with which the process of secession and formation of a separate party by the independents matures depends, of course, on many causes and circumstances, which cannot all be estimated. The Narodni-Socialists had a special group before the revolution, and the secession of that group, which was temporarily and loosely affiliated with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, was particularly easy. Our independents still have some personal traditions, ties with the Party, which retard the process of rupture, but these traditions are becoming ever weaker, and, besides, the revolution and counter-revolution bring forward new people, free of all revolutionary or Party traditions. The surrounding atmosphere of "*Vekhi*-ist" moods is very rapidly driving the spineless intelligentsia towards "independence." The "old" generation of revolutionaries is leaving the stage. Stolypin is doing his utmost to hunt down the representatives of this generation who in the days of freedom, in the years of revolution, had for the most part disclosed all their pseudonyms and all their secrecy. Prison, exile, penal servitude and emigration constantly increase the number of those withdrawn from the ranks, while the new generation grows slowly. Among the intelligentsia, especially that section of it which has "hitched on" to one or another form of legal activity, there is developing a complete lack of faith in the illegal Party and a disinclination to spend efforts on a task which is particularly difficult and particularly thankless in our times. "Friends in need are friends indeed," and the working class, which is passing through the difficult times of attack by the old and the new counter-revolutionary forces, will inevitably witness the defection of very many of its intellectual "friends for an hour," friends in times of

festivity, friends only for the duration of the revolution, friends who were revolutionaries during the revolution, but who are yielding to the general depression and are prepared to proclaim the "struggle for legality" at the first successes of the counter-revolution.

In a number of European countries, the counter-revolutionary forces succeeded in making a clean sweep of the remnants of the revolutionary and socialist organisations of the proletariat, as for instance after 1848. A bourgeois intellectual, who in the days of his youth joined Social-Democracy, is inclined, because of his petty-bourgeois psychology, to give up the struggle in disgust: so it was, so it will be; to defend the old illegal organisation is hopeless, to create a new one is still more hopeless; generally speaking, we have "exaggerated" the forces of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution, we erroneously ascribed "universal" importance to the role of the proletariat—all of these little ideas of the renegade *Obshchestvennoye Dvizheniye* directly and indirectly drive towards the renunciation of the illegal Party. Once on the slippery slope, the independent fails to observe that he is slipping down lower and lower, he does not realise that he is working hand in glove with Stolypin: Stolypin destroys the illegal Party physically, with the aid of the police, the gallows and penal servitude; the liberals do exactly the same thing directly, by their open propaganda of "*Vekh*" ideas; the independents among the Social-Democrats indirectly assist in the destruction of the illegal Party by their shouts about its "atrophy," by their refusal to help it and by their attempts (see letter 16 in *Golos*, No. 19-20) to justify desertion from it. From one step to the other.

Let us not shut our eyes to the fact that the longer the counter-revolutionary period lasts the more difficult will the fight for the Party become. That our Party comrades do not underestimate the danger, that they squarely face it is shown, for instance, by the article of Comrade K. in No. 13 of the central organ. But the resolute and direct recognition of the weakness of the Party, of the disintegration of the organisations and the difficulties of the situation does not make Comrade K. (or any of the Party comrades) waver for one moment on the question of whether the Party is



necessary, whether it is necessary to work for its restoration. The greater the difficulties of our position, the greater the number of enemies (the day before yesterday they were joined by the "Vekkhists," yesterday by the Narodni-Socialists, today by the independent Social-Democrats)—the more closely will all the Social-Democrats, irrespective of their shades, rally in defence of the Party. Many Social-Democrats, who could split on the question of how the revolutionary masses who trust Social-Democracy should be led in the attack, cannot but be strongly welded together by the question of the imperativeness of the fight for the preservation and consolidation of the illegal Social-Democratic Labour Party that was formed in the period of 1895-1910.

As regards *Golos* and the *Golos*-ites, they have most strikingly confirmed what was said of them in the resolution of the enlarged editorial board of *Proletary* in July of last year. That resolution (see supplement to No. 46 of *Proletary*, page 6) reads:

"...In the Menshevik camp of the Party, with the official organ of the faction, *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, completely captive to the Menshevik liquidators, the minority of the faction, having explored the path of liquidationism to the very end, is already raising its voice in protest against this path and is again seeking a Party basis for its activities..."<sup>1</sup>

The distance to the "end" of the path of liquidationism proved longer than we imagined at the time, but the correctness of the basic idea underlying these words has since been proved by facts. The correctness of the expression "captive to the liquidators," as applied to *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, has been particularly confirmed. They are precisely the captives of the liquidators, for they dare not either directly defend liquidationism or openly rebel against it. Even at the plenum they unanimously adopted the resolutions not as free men but as captives who for a short while had obtained leave from their "masters," and who returned to slavery on the day after the plenum. Unable to defend liquidationism, they laid great stress on all possible (and all invented!) obstacles, which had nothing to do with questions of principle, but which prevented them from renouncing liquidationism. And when all

<sup>1</sup> See "The Tasks of the Bolsheviks in the Party," in this volume, page 23.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

these "obstacles" were removed, when all their irrelevant, personal, organisational, financial and other claims had been satisfied, they "voted" against their will for the renunciation of liquidationism. Poor souls! They did not know at that time that the Manifesto of the Sixteen was already on its way to Paris, that the group of Mikhail and Co., the group of Potresov and Co. had stiffened in their defence of liquidationism. And they obediently turned round and followed the Sixteen, Mikhail and Potresov back to liquidationism.

The heinous crime the spineless "conciliators," like Yonov and Trotsky who defend or justify these people, commit is that they are causing their ruin by making them more dependent upon liquidationism. Whereas the decisive action of all the non-factional Social-Democrats against Mikhail and Co. and against Potresov and Co. (surely, neither Trotsky nor Yonov would venture to defend *these* groups!) might have brought some of the *Golos* captives of liquidationism back into the Party—the grimaces and the affectation of the "conciliators," while in no way reconciling the Party with the liquidators, only inspire the *Golos*-ites with "senseless hopes."

Incidentally, these grimaces, this affectation of the "conciliators," may, undoubtedly, be due, to a large extent, simply to a failure to understand the situation. It is only owing to lack of understanding that Comrade Yonov can confine himself to the question of the publication or non-publication of Martov's article, it is only owing to lack of understanding that the Vienna followers of Trotsky can reduce the question to "conflicts" on the central organ. Both Martov's article ("On the Right Road". . . to liquidationism) and the conflicts on the central organ are only particular episodes which cannot be understood unless taken in conjunction with the whole situation. For instance, Martov's article revealed to us, who during the past year have studied all the shades of liquidationism and *Golos*-ism, that Martov *has turned* (or was turned). The Martov who signed the "letter" of the Central Committee concerning the conference could not be the Martov who wrote articles such as "On the Right Road." By abstracting Martov's article from the chain of events, from the "letter" of the Central Committee that

preceded it, from No. 19-20 of *Golos* that followed it, from the Manifesto of the Sixteen, from the articles of Dan ("Struggle for Legality"), of Potresov and of *Vozrozhdeniye*, and by abstracting from the same chain of events the "conflicts" on the central organ, Trotsky and Yonov deprive themselves of the possibility of understanding the events that are taking place.<sup>1</sup> And, *vice versa*, everything becomes quite intelligible as soon as we concentrate our attention on *what lies at the root of it all*, namely, the final consolidation of the Russian independents and their final rupture with the "reactionary utopia" of re-establishing and strengthening the illegal Party.

### 7. *On Party Menshevism and on Its Evaluation*

The last question which we must consider in order to understand the "unity crisis" in our Party is the question of so-called Party Menshevism and the evaluation of its significance.

The views held by the non-factionalists, *i.e.*, by those who wish to be regarded as outside the factions, Yonov and Trotsky (No. 12 of *Pravda*<sup>2</sup> and the Vienna resolution), are very characteristic in this respect. Trotsky determinedly and persistently ignores Party Menshevism (this was already pointed out in No. 13 of the central organ), while Yonov betrays the "cherished" idea of his colleague in declaring that the significance of "Comrade Plekhanov's" actions (Yonov refuses to notice any other Party Mensheviks) lies in their "bolstering up" the factional struggle of the Bolsheviks and in advocating that "the Party be declared in a state of war."

That the position of Yonov and Trotsky is wrong should have been obvious to them for the simple reason that it is refuted by facts. We see in No. 13 of the central organ that in no fewer than seven Aid-the-Party groups abroad (in Paris, Geneva, Berne,

<sup>1</sup> Take another instance, "the theory of equal rights" for legal individuals in the illegal Party. Is it not clear *after* the actions of Mikhail and Co. and Potresov and Co. that the meaning and significance of this theory is the recognition of the group of independent-legalists and the subordination of the Party to them?

<sup>2</sup> The *Pravda* in question was not the Bolshevik paper, which did not yet exist at that time. It was published by Trotsky in Vienna.—*Ed.*

Zürich, Liège, Nice, San Remo), the Plekhanovists, or to be more exact, the Party Mensheviks, rose against *Golos* and demanded the fulfilment of the decisions of the plenum, demanded that *Golos* cease publication and pointed out the liquidationist nature of the ideological position taken up by *Golos* in No. 19-20. The same process is taking place among the Party workers in Russia, though perhaps less conspicuously. It is ridiculous to hush up these facts. To attempt, despite these facts, to represent Plekhanov's struggle against the *Golos*-ites as a literary "factional" struggle means—objectively—taking the side of the group of independent-legalists against the Party.

The obviously false and untenable position taken up by the said "conciliators" should have opened their eyes to the fact that they are wrong in their point of departure, namely, that the political significance of the unity reached at the plenum lies in the agreement with "given persons, groups and institutions." We must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the outward forms of Party events and their individual peculiarities; it is necessary to appraise the ideological and political significance of what is taking place. Judging by outward appearances the agreement was made with specified *Golos*-ites. But the basis, the conditions, of the agreement was the adoption by the *Golos*-ites of Plekhanov's position; this is evident from the analysis of the resolution on the state of affairs in the Party as given above.<sup>1</sup> Outwardly it was precisely the *Golos*-ites who were the representatives of Menshevism in the Party—for example, if we were to judge by the composition of the central organ. In reality, after the plenum, the central organ began to transform itself into an organ of "collaboration" between the Party Bolsheviks and the Plekhanovists, with the *Golos*-ites in full opposition. The result was a zigzag in the development of Party

<sup>1</sup> Of the four Menshevik members of the Central Committee who were present at the plenum, two directed all their efforts to winning the *Golos*-ites practically over to Plekhanov's position—by making the greatest concessions to them. This does not mean that these two were firm Party men, that they were proof against a return to the *Golos* camp. It merely means that Menshevism was caught at a moment when it could not as yet renounce the Party.

ents." From 1898 to 1900, the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists<sup>1</sup> were stronger than the *Iskra*-ists<sup>2</sup> both abroad and in Russia, yet they did not constitute a "strong faction."

Now that the *Golos*-ites have mobilised all their forces against Plekhanov and emptied upon him all their slop-pails—including Mr. Potresov and the recollections of how Martov was "offended" in 1901-03 (*sic!*)—the impotence of the *Golos*-ites becomes particularly obvious. Axelrod and Co. were hopelessly behind the times politically when they published abroad, in April, a symposium of personal abuse against Plekhanov, when in Russia the *Nasha Zarya* of February and the *Vozrozhdeniye* of March had already shifted the question to a completely different plane, and Plekhanov in No. 13 of the central organ had already passed from the history of his clashes with the *Golos*-ites to the struggle against their present-day policy. The *Golos*-ites, in recalling old "insults" (right up to 1901!), are floundering as helplessly as the *Vperyod*-ists who are still appealing to the kind-hearted to protect them from the Bolshevik centre.

And see how our "offended" ones, who in 1910 are raving at the very thought of a "Lenin-Plekhanov" agreement (their terminology!) no less than Maximov did a year ago over the same thing, are more and more betraying themselves. Like Maximov, the *Golos*-ites try to make it appear that it is a question of almost a personal agreement "between Lenin and Plekhanov," while the actions of the latter are explained as a "wild caprice" (p. 16 of the *Necessary Supplement*), as the "transformation of Saul into Paul," as "fluttering," etc., etc. By recalling Plekhanov's "five years of activity" (*ibid.*) as a Menshevik, Martov is doing his utmost to compromise him (retrospectively) for this fluttering, without noticing that by doing so he is besmirching himself most of all.

In the very same *Necessary Supplement*, the collective editorial board of *Golos* assures us (p. 32) that Plekhanov was "great" precisely during the above-mentioned five-year period (1904-08). Just see what follows from this. The Mensheviks proclaim Plekha-

<sup>1</sup> *Workers' Cause*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Spark*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

nov to be "great" not because of his activity during the twenty years (1883-1903) he remained true to himself, when he was neither a Menshevik nor a Bolshevik, but the founder of Social-Democracy, but because of his activity during the five years when, as the Mensheviks themselves admit, he was "fluttering," i.e., was not following a consistent Menshevik line. It appears that his "greatness" consisted in that he did not sink entirely into the swamp of Menshevism.

But it is precisely the five-year history of Menshevism, which Axelrod and Martov recalled to their own disadvantage, that furnishes a number of facts which help to *explain* the split among the Mensheviks by causes other than those petty, personal causes stressed by Martov.

In 1903, Plekhanov co-opts Axelrod and Martov, and declares in *Iskra*, No. 52, in an article entitled "What Should Not Be Done?" that he wants to *manœuvre with the opportunists* and, by these manœuvres, *reform* them. And in this he resorts to the most extreme attacks on the Bolsheviks. At the end of 1904 he tries to save Axelrod who had obviously slipped into liberalism ("The Plan of the Zemstvo Campaign"<sup>1</sup>), but does it in such a manner as to avoid mentioning a single word about such gems as proclaiming demonstrations before the Zemstvo to be "the highest type of demonstration" (in the pamphlet *Letter to the Central Committee*, published for Party members *only*). In the spring of 1905 Plekhanov becomes convinced of the hopelessness of these "manœuvres," leaves the Mensheviks and founds the *Dnevnik*,<sup>2</sup> which advocates reunion with the Bolsheviks. Number 3 of the *Dnevnik* (November 1905) is not Menshevik at all.

Having wasted about a year and a half on manœuvres with the opportunists within the Party (from the end of 1903 to the spring of 1905), Plekhanov, from the beginning of 1906 and during 1907, engages in *manœuvres* with the Cadets. In this he goes to far greater opportunist extremes than the other Mensheviks. But when Plekhanov, who proclaimed the tactics of "*manœuvring*" at the

<sup>1</sup> See Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, "The Zemstvo Campaign and *Iskra*'s Plan."—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> *Diary*.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

time of the First Duma and after its dispersal (See *Dnevnik*, No. 6), proposed an agreement between the revolutionary parties for a struggle for a constituent assembly, *Proletary* (No. 2 of September 11 [August 29], 1906, in the article, "Tactical Vacillations") immediately pointed out that this position was not Menshevik at all.

At the London Congress, in the spring of 1907, Plekhanov (according to Cherevanin's account, already cited by me in the preface to the volume *Twelve Years*) fought the *organisational anarchism* of the Mensheviks. He wanted a "labour congress" as a manœuvre for the development of the Party and not *against* the Party. During the second half of 1907, as we learn from Martov in the *Necessary Supplement*, Plekhanov "had to use a good deal of eloquence" to uphold the need for an illegal (*i.e.*, Party) Menshevik organ in opposition to Axelrod (who apparently preferred legal organs which in fact were non-Party). In 1908, the conflict over Potresov's article served as an occasion for his rupture with the liquidators.

What do these facts prove? They prove that the present split among the Mensheviks is not accidental but inevitable. "Manœuvring" does not exonerate the one who made mistakes in the name of manœuvres, and I withdraw nothing of what I wrote against those mistakes of Plekhanov. However, "manœuvring" *explains* why it is *easy* for some Mensheviks to go over to the independents, while for others it is *difficult* and even impossible. A Social-Democrat who by his manœuvres leads the working class to follow the Cadets causes no less damage than he who does it because of his immanent gravitation towards opportunism. But the former will be able, will manage, to stop, while the latter will roll down into the ditch. A Russian proverb says: Make a certain person bow in prayer and he will batter his forehead.<sup>1</sup> Plekhanov might have said: Make the Potresovs and the Dans go to the

<sup>1</sup> The proverb is: Make a fool bow in prayer, and he will batter his forehead, *i.e.*, will pray too zealously. Russian Orthodox Christians, when praying, repeatedly touch the ground with their foreheads.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

Right for purposes of manœuvring, and they will go to the Right on principle.

The stand taken by certain Mensheviks justifies their appellation, "Party Mensheviks." They took their stand upon the struggle for the Party—against the independent-legalists. In the *Necessary Supplement* Mr. Potresov and the editors of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* vainly try to evade this simple and obvious question.

Engels too fought the S.D.F.<sup>1</sup> (the British Social-Democrats)—says Potresov wriggling. (Page 24.) This is sophistry, my dear sir: Engels corrected the Party, but you do not say how the Party is to be corrected; you do not even say straightforwardly whether an illegal Social-Democratic party is necessary now, whether the R.S.D.L.P. is necessary or not. In front of Stolypin you say: *No* (*Nasha Zarya*), but in front of Party members, in the illegal press, you *dare* not say so, you wriggle and twist.

"Lenin-Plekhanov recommend a war against the new forms of the labour movement" (p. 3), "we *start from* . . . the position, conditions and requirements of the real labour movement" (p. 32)—we are assured by the editors. Sophistry, my dear sirs. You yourselves have acknowledged that the plenum did *everything* to recognise these new forms, and the Bolsheviks, too, by the struggle they waged *before* the plenum, *proved* it. We do not differ on the question as to whether "new forms are necessary," whether it is necessary to conduct legal work, or to found legal societies; we do not differ on this at all; what we differ on is the question as to whether it is permissible for legalists conducting such work, like the group of Mikhail and Co., like the group of Potresov and Co., to consider themselves Social-Democrats, *when in fact they are independent of the party of the Social-Democrats*, or whether it is the *duty* of the Social-Democratic Party men to recognise the Party, to propagate the need for it, to work in it, to work in its organisation, to set up illegal nuclei everywhere and in all unions for regular communications with the Party, etc. And you understand perfectly well that we differ *now*—after the plenum—on this account *only*.

The *Golos*-ites try to represent our efforts to draw closer to the

<sup>1</sup> The Social-Democratic Federation.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*



Party Mensheviks—to enter into an agreement with them in order to fight for the Party against the independents—as a personal *bloc* between “Lenin and Plekhanov.” They violently abuse the author of the article against Potresov, in No. 47-48 of *Proletary*, for his tone of a “flattering courtier” who, they allege, is “speculating on an agreement” with Plekhanov.

I turn to this article and read on page 7:

“Of course, all the mistakes committed by Plekhanov during the revolution occurred precisely because he did *not* consistently follow the line of policy which he himself had advocated in the old *Iskra*”

Let the readers judge what looks more like “flattery” and “speculation”: this blunt indication of what the Bolsheviks regard as Plekhanov’s mistake, or the proclaiming of Plekhanov’s “greatness” precisely in the period when he was a Menshevik and according to the Mensheviks was “fluttering.”

The editors of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* write:

“Plekhanov will be with us” when “the time comes again for *responsible*” (the italics are in *Golos*) “political actions.” (P. 32 of the *Necessary Supplement*.)

This betrays political ignorance, but is clear enough as regards “speculation.” It betrays ignorance, because the present time is just the time which calls for political actions *a hundred times more responsible* for the old leaders than those in time of open struggle when the masses themselves will much more easily find the way. It is clear in the sense of “speculation,” because readiness is expressed to recognise Plekhanov as a Menshevik once more, as soon as he starts “manœuvring” again.

We are surprised that the *Golos*-ites do not realise the significance that outbursts of this kind have in conjunction with Axelrod’s phrase for example: “We did not want to stoop” (before Plekhanov) “to the role of toadying flunkies.” (P. 19.) You are behaving exactly like the *type of people* mentioned in your concluding words. Your attitude towards Plekhanov corresponds precisely to the “formula” of those people: “either a smack on the face, or allow me to kiss your hand.”

For five years you have been asking for his “hand,” now on thirty-two double-sized pages you are “smacking his face,” and on the

thirty-second page you "express readiness"; you are prepared to recognise him as a Menshevik once more and kiss his hand.

As regards ourselves, we are entitled to say that at the time of his "fluttering," Plekhanov was never a Bolshevik. We do not and never will consider him a Bolshevik. But we do consider him a *Party* Menshevik, as we do any Menshevik capable of rebelling against the group of independent legalists and carrying on the struggle against them to the end. We regard it as the absolute duty of all Bolsheviks in these difficult times, when the task of the day is the struggle for Marxism in theory and for the Party in the practical work of the labour movement, to do everything possible to arrive at a *rapprochement* with such Social-Democrats.

### 8. Conclusion. The Platform of the Bolsheviks

The Party conference fixed by the plenum cannot and must not confine itself to the agenda tentatively proposed by the plenum on condition that all Mensheviks adopt the Party stand. This did not come off, and it is not fitting for us to play hide-and-seek with ourselves.

The election slogan for this conference, the slogan under which it is to be convened and prepared must be the *consolidation of the Party members* in the struggle against the group of independent legalists. In accordance with this task and in view of the anti-Party position of the *Golos*-ites, we must resolutely reorganise all the leading institutions of the Party, so that they may not be drawn into the squabbles which every *Golos*-ite is preparing and will be preparing for them, but do the *real work of building up the Party*. The *Golos*-ites do not want to build up the Party, they secretly want to help the group of independent legalists.

Such must be the platform of the Bolsheviks for this conference: to build up the Party in accordance with the December (1908) resolutions and in their spirit; to continue the work of the plenum, making the above-mentioned corrections of its decisions, corrections which have been dictated by the entire course of events since the plenum; to concentrate all our efforts on a systematic, un-

deviating, all-sided and persistent utilisation of all and every legal possibility in order to gather the forces of the proletariat, to help it group and consolidate itself, to help it train for the struggle and stretch its limbs; and also steadily to restore the illegal nuclei, to learn how to adapt them to new conditions, to restore the illegal purely Party organisations, and, first and foremost, the purely proletarian organisations, which alone are capable of directing all the work in the legal organisations, of imbuing this work with the revolutionary Social-Democratic spirit, of carrying on an irreconcilable struggle against the renegades and the independent-legalists, and of helping to usher in the time when our Party, our R.S.D.L.P., having preserved all the traditions of the revolution and of the great victories of the proletariat in 1905, and having strengthened and enlarged the proletarian army of the Party, will lead it into a new battle, to new victories.

June [May] 1910.     •

## THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF STATE POWER, THE PROSPECTS AND LIQUIDATIONISM

FOR their importance, the questions indicated in the above heading occupy one of the foremost, if not the foremost place in the system of views of a Marxist who wishes to orientate himself in the realities around him. The period 1908-10 undoubtedly represents something peculiar. The social structure of society and of state power is characterised by changes; and unless these changes are understood, not a single step can be taken in any sphere of social activity. The understanding of these changes determines the prospects, by which we mean, of course, not idle guessing about things nobody knows, but the fundamental trends of economic and political development—those trends, the resultant of which determines the immediate future of the country, those trends which determine the tasks, direction and character of the activity of every intelligent public man. And this last question concerning the tasks, direction and character of our activity is most closely connected with the question of liquidationism.

No wonder then that as far back as 1908, as soon as it became clear, or it began to become clear, that we were confronted with a new, peculiar period in Russian history, the Marxists placed on the order of the day precisely the questions of the social structure of state power, the prospects and liquidationism; they pointed to the inseparable connection between these questions and systematically discussed them. Furthermore, they did not confine themselves to mere discussion, for that would have been "literature writing" in the bad sense of the word; that would have been possible only in a debating circle of intellectuals who are not conscious of their responsibility and are careless in regard to politics. No, they worked out a precise formulation of the results of the discussion that could serve as a guide not only for a member of the given

literary circle, not only for a person in one way or another connected with a definite intellectual category, but for any and every conscious representative of the class which regards Marxism as its doctrine. By the end of 1908, this necessary work was completed.<sup>1</sup>

I have already pointed out in No. 2 of our magazine<sup>2</sup> what the principal results of this work were. I take the liberty of quoting a few lines from this magazine in order to make the further exposition more intelligible.

"The development of the Russian state system during the last three centuries shows that it has been changing its class character in one definite direction. The monarchy of the seventeenth century with the Boyar Duma did not resemble the bureaucratic-aristocratic monarchy of the eighteenth century. The monarchy of the first half of the nineteenth century was not the same as the monarchy of 1861-1904. During 1908-10 a new phase became clearly defined which marked *one more step* in the same direction and which may be called a tendency towards bourgeois monarchy. In close connection with this step is the Third Duma and the present-day agrarian policy. The new phase, therefore, is not an accident but a peculiar stage in the capitalist evolution of the country. Without solving the old problems, being unable to solve them, and consequently *without removing them*, this new phase demands the application of new methods of preparation for the old solution of the old problems." (No. 2, p 43)

And a few lines further:

"Those who deny (or do not understand) ... that we are confronted with old problems, that we are approaching their old solution, *in reality* abandon the basis of Marxism, *in reality* become captives of the liberals (like Potresov, Levitsky, etc. . .)" (P 44)

Whatever attitude one may adopt towards the set of ideas expressed in these propositions, it would hardly be possible to deny the very close connection and interrelation that exist between the separate parts of this estimate of the *given* period. Take, for instance, the *ukase* of November 22 [9], 1906 (the Law of June 27 [14], 1910). It is quite indisputable that it bears a clearly expressed bourgeois character which marks a change of principle in the agrarian policy long pursued by the "upper" strata towards

<sup>1</sup> Lenin refers here to the decisions of the December Conference of 1908, and in particular to the resolution passed by it: "On the Present Situation and the Tasks of the Party." See present volume, pp. 13-16.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> See the article "Our Abolishers," *Collected Works*, Russian ed., Vol. XV.—*Ed.*

the village commune and allotment ownership. But so far not even the most unprincipled weathercocks, like the Cadets, have ventured to assert that this change of principle has already settled the question, has *already* created new foundations of capitalist peasant economy, or has *already* removed the old problems. The connection between the Law of June 27 [14], 1910, and the system of elections to the Third Duma, as well as the social composition of the latter, is obvious; it would have been impossible to carry out this law, to take a series of measures to put it into practice except by establishing an alliance between the central government and the feudal (let us use this not very exact, general European expression) landlords and the upper strata of the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie. We are thus faced with a peculiar stage in the *entire* process of capitalist evolution of the country. Does this stage of evolution eliminate the preservation of "power and revenue" (speaking in a sociological sense) in the hands of the landlords of the feudal type? No, it does not. The changes that took place in this, as in all the other spheres, do not remove the *fundamental* traits of the old regime, of the old relation of social forces. Hence the fundamental task of an intelligent public man is clear; he must evaluate these new changes, "make use" of them, grasp them—if we may use that expression—and, at the same time, he must not abandon himself helplessly to the stream, he must not throw out the old luggage, he must preserve the essentials not only in theory, in the programme, in the principles of policy, but also in the forms of activity.

How then did Messrs. Potresov and Martov, Dan and Axelrod, Levitsky and Martynov, the "ideological leaders" who group themselves round publications of the type of *Vozrozhdeniye*, *Zhizn*,<sup>1</sup> *Dyelo Zhizni*,<sup>2</sup> *Nasha Zarya*, etc., react to this definitely formulated answer to the "vexed questions," to this direct and clear exposition of definite views? The point is that they reacted not like politicians, not like "ideological leaders," not like responsible publicists, not like a literary category, but like a circle of intellectuals, like free-

<sup>1</sup> *Life*—Ed. Eng. ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Life's Cause*—Ed. Eng. ed.

lances of free groups of the writing fraternity. They tittered condescendingly—as men who know how to appreciate the fashion and the spirit of the times that are accepted in liberal drawing rooms—over this antiquated, out-of-date, cranky striving for definite answers to vexed questions. Why such definiteness, when one can write wherever one pleases, about anything one pleases, whatever one pleases and in any way one pleases? When Messrs. the Milyukovs and Struves furnish excellent examples of all the advantages, conveniences and privileges that follow from the evasion of direct answers, of precise enunciation of views, of formulated *professions de foi*,<sup>1</sup> etc.? When Forgetful Ivans (and especially the Ivans who do not like to recall the precise formulations of the past) are being honoured and respected in the broadest circles of “society”?

Thus, throughout the past three years, we have not observed the slightest attempt on the part of this entire literary fraternity to present *their own* formulated answer to the “vexed questions.” There were many metaphors and idle hypotheses, but not a single straight answer. The distinguishing, characteristic feature of the fraternity under consideration was their love for *amorphousness*, i.e., the very symptom which, *at the very time* the direct answer was given to the vexed questions, was recognised in the most definite, precise and unequivocal manner to be a constituent part of the concept *liquidationism*. To drift amorphously with the stream, to wallow in one’s amorphousness, to “put the lid on” what is the very opposite of the present amorphousness—that is one of the basic features of liquidationism. Opportunists always and everywhere passively abandon themselves to the stream, rest content with answers “from case to case,” from Congress (Drunks)<sup>2</sup> to Congress (factory) ; they are satisfied to proceed from organising one “society” (albeit the most respectable and useful: trade unions, consumers’ societies, cultural societies, temperance societies, etc.) to organising another society, etc. Liquidationism is the sum total of the tendencies that are peculiar to all opportunism in general and manifest themselves

<sup>1</sup> Profession of faith, enunciation of one’s convictions, in the given instance political.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Ironical reference to the Temperance Congress.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

in definite concrete forms during one of the periods of Russian history in one of our social-political trends.

History has preserved only two precise opinions of the liquidators on the above "direct answer" (to the vexed questions). The first opinion: the adjective "bourgeois" ought to be replaced by the adjective "plutocratic." Such a substitution, however, would be utterly incorrect. The epoch of 1861-1904 reveals to us in the most diverse spheres of life the growth of the influence and often the preponderating influence of the plutocracy. During the period of 1908-10 we see, not "plutocracy," but the results of the fact that the bourgeoisie, conscious of itself as a class and taking into account the lessons which the preceding three years had taught its class consciousness, is creating an ideology which in principle is hostile to socialism (not to European socialism, not to socialism in general, but to Russian socialism as such) and to democracy. Moreover, the bourgeoisie is organised on a national scale, *i.e.*, precisely as a class, a definite section of which is permanently represented (and in a very influential way, too) in the Third Duma. Finally, in the agrarian policy of 1908-10 there is also a system which carries out a definite plan of the bourgeois agrarian regime. To be sure, this plan does not "work" yet; but this failure is the failure of *one* of the bourgeois systems, while the *plutocracy* has undoubtedly been "successful" in the villages, *i.e.*, the village plutocracy is certainly gaining in consequence of the agrarian policy of 1908-10, whereas the bourgeois regime, for which so many sacrifices are made, is still unable to "fit in." In a word, the proposed term "plutocratic" is inept in every respect, so much so that the liquidators themselves apparently prefer to forget about this proposal.

Another opinion: the above answer is incorrect because it is equal to the advice to "rush to the place where once we met with. . ." bad luck. This brief but energetic opinion is valuable because it expresses in a striking form the results of all the literary productions of the liquidators from the *Obshchestvennoye Dvizhe-*



niye of Potresov down to Mr. Levitsky in *Nasha Zarya*. The content of this opinion is a purely negative one; it confines itself to condemning "rushing" without giving any positive indication as to where one should "rush." Swim, they seem to say, as you can, as "everybody" is swimming, but it is not worth while indulging in generalisations as to where it will or should lead.

But however much the opportunists would like to avoid being worried by generalisations, to avoid all "unpleasant" talk about giving a direct answer to the "vexed questions"—it proves impossible to avoid it. Drive nature out by the door and it will fly back through the window. By the irony of history the very same liquidators who like to pose as "progressives," who are alien to "conservatism," and who in 1908 scornfully turned up their noses at the suggestions that there was need for a direct answer, were forced, *almost a year and a half later*, in the summer of 1910, to reckon with these suggestions. And they were forced to do so by events in their own camp. They had almost completely evaded the direct answer demanded in certain contemptible, out-of-date, atrophied, useless, pernicious, "hopeless quarters"—when suddenly, a year and a half later, a "trend" arises among the liquidators themselves, which also demands a direct answer and which challengingly gives a direct answer!

As was to be expected, the role of "challenger" was assumed by Y. Larin; but this time he was not alone. Larin, as is known, is the *enfant terrible* of opportunism. He is distinguished by the great fault (from the point of view of the opportunists) that he takes the trends that appear among them seriously, sincerely and thoughtfully, tries to link them up into a consistent whole, to think them out to the end, to obtain direct answers, to draw practical conclusions. Those who are familiar with Larin's book on a broad labour party (that book appeared three or four years ago) will certainly remember how he crushed Axelrod's notorious idea of a labour congress in his fervent embrace.

In March 1910, Larin began to publish a series of articles in *Vozrozhdeniye* on this very question of the social structure of state

power, the prospects and liquidationism. He was joined by Mr. Piletsky. Both writers tackled these questions, to which they vainly sought a direct answer in their liquidationist camp, with the zeal of neophytes, and they began to hit out right and left: "No use talking of feudalism in present-day Russia, the government has *already* evolved into a bourgeois government."

"Both the 'first' and the 'second' elements," says Larin singling out the notorious "third element," "may sleep in peace; October 1905 is not on the order of the day." (*Vozrozhdeniye*, No. 9-10, p. 20.) "If the Duma were abolished, it would be restored more rapidly than in post-revolutionary Austria, which abolished the constitution in 1851 only to recognise it again in 1860, after nine years, without any revolution, simply because of the interests of the most influential section of the ruling classes, which reconstructed its economy on capitalist lines. Later on, after the regime of bourgeois relations is consolidated, the struggle of the various sections of the ruling classes among themselves will force them in our country too, as everywhere else, to extend the limits of the suffrage." (*Ibid.*, p. 26.) "The process of bringing Russia into the capitalist world . . . is being consummated in the political sphere as well. This consummation means that at the present stage a *nation-wide* revolutionary movement like that of 1905 is impossible." (P. 27.)

"Since the power is thus" (according to Larin's conclusions) "not vested 'almost entirely' in the hands of the feudal landlords, the struggle for power of the 'capitalists of land and factory' against the feudal lords cannot be transformed into a nation-wide struggle *against the existing government*." (No. 11, p. 9.) "...To base one's tactical line on the expectation of an approaching 'nation-wide revival' means condemning oneself to fruitless waiting." (*Ibid.*, p. 11.) "It is impossible to sit between two stools. If nothing has changed in the social nature of the government, then the tasks and the forms of activity *will necessarily* prove to be the old ones, and the only thing to do is to 'fight the liquidators.' But if anyone wants to go further, to *build something new* in place of the old, as a *continuation*, as an elevation of the old that has fallen to pieces and become useless, then let him consistently take into account the conditions of construction." (*Ibid.*, p. 14.)

Well, is not Larin naive? He demands that the opportunists be "consistent," that they should not "sit between two stools"!

The editors of *Vozrozhdeniye* were perplexed. In No. 9-10 they announced that they disagreed with Larin and wrote that while he revealed "freshness of thought," "Y. Larin's articles failed to convince us." In No. 11, apparently on behalf of the editors, V. Mirov wrote in opposition to Larin. Mirov admitted that Larin and Piletsky represented "a definite *trend* which theoretically has

not been studied to any extent yet, but which speaks in very clear language" (the greatest fault from the standpoint of the opportunists!). Mr. Mirov wrote:

"Larin has incidentally and unexpectedly" (just like that! This restless Larin with his "very clear language" is always causing annoyance to his friends!) "also touched another question in connection with liquidationism. It seems to us that there is no close connection between the forms of building up the Party and the nature of the Russian government, and we reserve to ourselves the right to deal separately with this matter." (Issue of July 20 [7], 1910, p. 22.)

It was L. Martov in *Zhizn*, No. 1, of September 12 [August 30], 1910, who "dealt separately" with the matter on behalf of that "we." He declared that "he could only join" (p. 4) V. Mirov and the editors against Larin. Thus the last word in this entire discussion among the liquidators has been uttered by L. Martov.

As usual, Martov tackles the matter very smartly and very . . . "dexterously." He begins by saying that "a careful search was made for the bourgeoisie in power, or for the ruling bourgeoisie, immediately after the *coup d'état* of June 16 [3]." "The June 3 regime is the regime of the domination of the Russian commercial-industrial bourgeoisie. This conception was accepted equally by the above-mentioned group of Menshevik writers (Larin, Piletsky) and by their antipodes, the orthodox Bolsheviks, who in 1903" wrote "about the birth of a bourgeois monarchy in Russia."

Well, is this not a gem of "dexterity"? Larin reproaches Martov with sitting between two stools and bluntly admits, without subterfuges and stratagems, that it is necessary to fight the liquidators if the answer to the vexed questions given by the "orthodox" is not to be redrafted.

But Martov "dexterously" turns somersaults in mid-air and attempts to persuade the readers (who in August 1910 had no opportunity whatever of hearing the other side) that "this conception" "was accepted equally" both by Larin and by the "orthodox"!!

This dexterity smacks of Burenin and Menshikov for it is impossible to imagine a more shameless . . . deviation from the truth.

Among other things, Martov writes in the same article: "In literary discussions people usually forget who really 'started it.'"

True, that happens in discussions *among literary men* in which there is no question of working out a precise, properly formulated answer to vexed questions. But the case before us is not a discussion among literary men and *not only a literary "discussion,"* a fact that is well, thoroughly and directly known to L. Martov who deliberately misleads the readers of *Zhizn*. Martov knows very well what the formulated reply given and supported by the "orthodox" was. Martov knows very well that it is precisely this reply that Larin is fighting, calling it "ossified routine," "building castles in the air," etc. Martov knows very well that *he himself* and all his adherents and colleagues rejected the formulated reply given by the "orthodox." Martov knows perfectly well "who really started it," who began (and finished) the framing of the precise answer, and who confined himself to sniggering and expressing dissent, without giving *any* answer at all.

It is impossible to imagine a more disgusting, a more dishonest trick than the one played by L. Martov! Larin by his straightforwardness and outspokenness painfully hurt the diplomats of liquidationism when he admitted (though only after a year and a half) that it was quite impossible to dispense with a definite answer. Truth is bitter. And L. Martov tries to deceive the reader by making it appear that Larin accepts a "scheme that is identical" with that of the orthodox—although in reality the two schemes are *opposed to each other*: Larin's scheme *implies* the justification of liquidationism, that of the "orthodox" *implies* the condemnation of liquidationism.

In order to cover up his trick, Martov picks out from the "scheme" *one* little word and distorts its connection with the context (a method worked out to perfection by Burenin and Menshikov). Martov asserts that the "orthodox" wrote about the "birth of a bourgeois monarchy in Russia"—and since Larin writes that there can be no talk of feudalism in Russia, that the government is already bourgeois—"ergo" the schemes of Larin and of the "orthodox" are "*identical*"!! The trick is done; and the reader who believes Martov is fooled.

In reality, however, the "scheme," or, to be more precise, the answer of the orthodox, is to the effect that the old power in

Russia is "*taking another step along the path of transformation into a bourgeois monarchy*"; and precisely such a path of capitalist development as would "*preserve to the landowners of precisely the feudal type their power and their income,*" and that as a result of this state of affairs "*the basic factors of economic and political life which called forth*" the first crisis in the beginning of the twentieth century<sup>1</sup> "*continue to operate.*"

Larin says: The government is *already* bourgeois, therefore only the partisans of "ossified routine" speak of the "preservation of power" by the feudal lords, therefore the "basic factors" of the former upsurge do *not* continue to operate, therefore it is necessary to build something new "in place of 'the old that has become useless.'"

The "orthodox" say: The government is taking *another step along the path* of transformation into a bourgeois (not government in general, but) monarchy, while the real power remains and is preserved in the hands of the feudal lords, so that the "basic factors" of former tendencies, of the former type of evolution "*continue to operate,*" and therefore those who talk of "the old that has become useless" are liquidators who *in reality* have become captives to the liberals.

The contrast between the two schemes, between the two answers is obvious. We have before us two different *consistent* answers, which lead to different conclusions.

Martov is juggling *à la* Burenin, alleging that *both* answers "*speak of*" the "birth of a bourgeois monarchy." One might with equal right refer to the fact that both answers recognise the continuing capitalist development of Russia! *On the basis* of the common recognition (by all Marxists and by all those who wish to be Marxists) of capitalist development, *a dispute is proceeding* as to the degree, forms and conditions of that development. And Martov confuses the issue in order to represent what is beyond dispute as the point at issue. It is on the basis of the *common* recognition (by all Marxists and by all those who wish to be Marxists) of the development of the old power *along the path*

<sup>1</sup>*I.e., the Revolution of 1905-07.—Ed.*

*of transformation into a bourgeois monarchy* that the dispute is proceeding as to the degree, forms, conditions and course of this transformation; and Martov confuses the issue (do the old factors continue to operate? Is it admissible to renounce the old forms? etc.) in order to represent what is beyond dispute as the point at issue!

That the government of Russia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been generally evolving "along the path of transformation into a bourgeois monarchy" is not denied by Larin, just as hitherto it has never been denied by any sane man wishing to be a Marxist. The proposal to substitute the word "plutocratic" for the adjective "bourgeois" incorrectly appraises the *degree* of this transformation. But it does not dare dispute *in principle* the fact that the actual "path," the path of real evolution, lies *precisely* in this transformation. Let him try to assert that the monarchy of 1861-1904 (*i.e.*, undoubtedly a less capitalistic monarchy than the present one), when compared with the period of serfdom of Nicholas I, does *not* represent *one* of the steps "along the path of transformation into a bourgeois monarchy"!

Martov, far from trying to assert this, on the contrary, "joins" V. Mirov, who, in refutation of Larin, refers precisely to the bourgeois character of the Witte reforms and of the reforms of the 'sixties!

Now let the reader judge of the "dexterity" of Mirov and Martov. At first, in opposition to Larin, they repeat the arguments which *a year and a half ago* were used by the "orthodox" against the closest friends, adherents and colleagues of Martov and Mirov—and then they assure the reader that the "schemes" of Larin and of the "orthodox" are identical.

This is not only an example of "literature writing" *versus* politics (for politics demands definite and direct answers, whereas literary men often confine themselves to beating about the bush); it is more than that—it is an example of the degradation of literature to the level of Bureninism.

After quoting the above words of Larin that "if nothing has changed," etc., "then . . . the only thing to do is to fight the liquidators," Martov replies to him:

"Hitherto we thought that our tasks were determined by the social structure of the society in which we act and that the forms of our activity were determined, in the first place, by these tasks and, in the second place, by *political conditions*. The 'social nature of the government' has, therefore, no *direct*" (the italics are Martov's) "bearing on the determination of our tasks and forms of activity."

This is not an answer, but an empty, evasive phrase. Martov again attempts to confuse the issue, to shift the dispute to irrelevant ground. The question is not whether the social nature of the government is *directly* or *indirectly* connected with the tasks and forms of activity. Even if this connection is an *indirect* one it will in no way alter things once the close and indissoluble connection is recognised. And Martov does not venture to say a *word* against the recognition of this close and indissoluble connection. His reference to "political conditions" is nothing but dust thrown in the eyes of the reader. To draw a contrast between "the social nature of the government" and the "political conditions" is as senseless as if I were to draw a contrast between galoshes manufactured by human hands, and rubbers. Rubbers are galoshes. And there are no such things as galoshes that have not been made by human hands. The nature of the government is exactly what constitutes "political conditions." And the nature of the government is nothing but social.

The sum total of all this is that Martov "beat about the bush" and evaded a direct answer to Larin. He evaded an answer because he had no answer to give. Larin is quite right in stating that views on the "social nature of the government" (to be more precise—its economic nature) are closely and inseparably connected with views on the "tasks and forms of activity." Both Larin and the "orthodox" appreciate and apply this connection. Martov (and his tribe) displays no such consistency in his views. That is why Martov is compelled to wriggle and make shift with "rubbers."

Listen further.

"The idea of the gradual, so to say, organic 'growth' of the working class into that 'legal country' which has obtained the rudiments of a constitutional regime gleamed more or less clearly in the minds of these Mensheviks" (Martov refers to Kogan as an example, *Obrazovaniye*, 1907): "a gradual extension of the third-of-June privileges of the bourgeoisie" (not "plutocracy," eh?) "to the broad circles of democracy. If such were really the fundamental principle of contemporary 'liquidationism' in quotation marks, or of contemporary 'legalism,' we would in that case be confronted with the actual liquidation of our traditions, with a real legalism elevated to a principle, with a rupture in principle with all our past. With such liquidationism we should have to wage a serious struggle. . . . Are we really destined to witness reformists *creeping into* the regime of a renovated Tolmachevism?"

Then comes a footnote by Martov: "Of course" (!!)"I do not suspect Larin of reformist tendencies."

This long quotation was necessary in order graphically to demonstrate Martov's "method" to the reader. He admits that reformism "gleamed more or less clearly" in the mind of Kogan (a Menshevik who systematically collaborates in serious "works" with Martov). He admits that *if* reformism were really the fundamental principle of liquidationism, it would be a "rupture with the past." He hurls a ringing, noisy, stinging phrase at the "reformists" who are "creeping into," etc. And he winds up with—what do you think?—with an assurance that he, *of course*, does "not suspect" Larin of reformist "tendencies"!

This is exactly what Eduard Bernstein, Jean Jaurès or Ramsay MacDonald say. They all "admit" that in the minds of certain "extremists" there "gleams" something that is bad, reformism, liberalism. They all admit that *if* liberalism were the "fundamental principle" of *their* policy, that would be a "rupture with the past." They all hurl ringing, noisy, stinging phrases at the "liberals who are cringing," etc. And they all wind up with . . . assur-

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps not all the readers will understand this Gallicism which to my mind is an extreme misfit. "Legal country" is a literal translation of the French *pays légal* which implies those classes or groups, strata of the population, which are represented in parliament and which, unlike the masses of the people, enjoy constitutional privileges. Incidentally, this is characteristic for an appraisal of Martov's vacillations. He does not want to admit that Russia in 1908-10 took "another step along the path of transformation into a bourgeois monarchy." But he does admit that the "bourgeoisie" (and not the plutocracy) on June 3, 1907, "obtained the rudiments of a constitutional regime." Who can make head or tail of this?



ances that they do "not suspect" the Larins—I beg pardon—they do "not suspect" their more candid, more "Right" comrades, adherents, friends, colleagues and collaborators, of liberal bourgeois tendencies.

The crux of the matter is that, in the articles quoted, Larin gave an exposition of the "system" of views of the most undoubted, most genuine reformism! To deny this means denying the obvious, robbing the concept reformism of all meaning. And if you "refute" Larin, "condemn" reformism as "a principle," hurl ringing phrases at those who are "creeping into," and at the same time positively assert that you do "not suspect" Larin of reformism—surely you thereby utterly expose yourselves! Thereby you fully prove that your reference to your hostility "on principle" to "reformism as a principle" is nothing but the vow a peddler utters when he says: "Believe me, upon my oath, it costs me more."

Believe me, upon my oath: I condemn reformism as a principle, *but* I do not "suspect" Larin of reformism (those *suspicious* orthodox people are really disgusting!), and I am at one with Larin in his liquidationist practice.

Such is the "expanded formula" of present-day Russian opportunism.

Here is an example of the application of this formula by Martov *himself*, whom naive people (or those unable to understand the deep nature of the *new* re-grouping) still regard as an "undoubted" non-liquidator:

<sup>1</sup> "The tactics which are to be observed in the activities of the so-called 'liquidators,'" writes Martov on pp. 9-10, "are the 'tactics' which put the open labour movement in the centre, strive to extend it in every possible direction, and seek *within*" (the italics are Martov's) "this open labour movement, and there only" (note: and there only!), "the elements for the revival of the Party."

Thus speaks L. Martov. And this is nothing but reformism *creeping into* the regime of a renovated Tolmachevism. The italics "creeping into" I have borrowed from Martov himself, for it is important to note that in the words just quoted Martov *in fact* preaches precisely "creeping into." No matter how much such preachings are accompanied by oaths and imprecations against

"reformism as a principle," the *matter* is not altered in the least. In reality, having said "and there only," and "in the centre," Martov thereby pursues precisely a reformist policy (in the specific situation of Russia in 1908-10); and as to the vows, promises, assurances, oaths—let political babes believe them.

"... The dispute between Marx and Willich-Schapper in the beginning of the fifties of the last century turned precisely" (!!) "round the question of the importance of secret societies and the possibility of leading the political struggle *from within them*... The Blanquists" (in France in the 'sixties) "'prepared' for these events" (the downfall of Bonapartism) "by setting up secret societies and bottling up individual workers in them, but the French section of the Marxists... went into the labour organisations, founded them and 'fought for legality' by every means..."

Both the instances mentioned are tunes from quite a different opera. The dispute between Marx and Willich in the 'fifties, between the Blanquists and the Marxists in the 'sixties, *did not turn round the question* of whether it was necessary to seek the "elements for the revival of the Party" "only" within "peaceful, tolerated" (Martov, *Zhizn*, No. 1, p. 10) organisations. Martov knows this perfectly well and tries in vain to mislead the readers. Neither of *these* disputes were conducted over the "revival" of the workers' party, for at that time it was impossible to dispute about the revival of something that had not hitherto existed. Both of these disputes turned round the question of whether a workers' party—a party based on the *labour* movement, a *class* party—was necessary at all. It was precisely this that was denied by Willich and by the Blanquists of the 'sixties—a fact but too well known to Martov who in vain tries to *obscure* matters *now* in dispute by general talk about what is now indisputable. The view that "*only*" in peaceful and tolerated organisations should one seek elements for the revival or for the birth of the Party was never shared by Marx, either in the 'fifties or in the 'sixties; *even at the end of the 'seventies*, during an immeasurably higher phase of development of capitalism and bourgeois monarchy, Marx and Engels declared *ruthless* war on the German opportunists who had wiped out the recent past of the German Party, deplored "extremes," talked of "more civilised" forms of the movement (in the language of the present-day Russian liquidators it is called "Europeanisation").

and advocated the idea that “*only*” in “peaceful and tolerated” organisations should one “seek the elements for the revival,” etc.

“To sum up:” writes Martov, “quite sufficient evidence for the theoretical substantiation and political justification of what the ‘Mensheviks’ who remain true to Marxism are now doing is contained in the fact that the present regime is an inherently contradictory combination of absolutism and constitutionalism, and that the Russian working class has sufficiently matured to follow the example of the workers of the progressive countries of the ‘West’ in striking at this regime through the Achilles heel of its contradictions.”

Martov’s words (“quite sufficient”) are *quite sufficient* to enable us also to sum up. Martov regards as “quite sufficient” that which is recognised by both the Cadets and a section of the Octobrists. In January 1911 it was none other than *Rech* that formulated the question in the way Martov proposed to formulate it in August 1910. A contradictory combination of constitutionalism and anti-constitutionalism; two camps—for the constitution and against it. What is quite sufficient for *Rech* is “quite sufficient” for Martov. There is not a *grain* of Marxism in this. Marxism has evaporated from this completely and liberalism has been put in its place. The fact that we have a “contradictory combination” is *not by any means* “sufficient” for a Marxist. Marxism only begins with the beginning of the consciousness, the comprehension that this truth is not sufficient, that it contains a spoonful of truth and a barrel of untruth, that it obscures the depth of the contradictions, that it embellishes the reality and rejects the only possible means of finding a way out of the situation.

“The contradictory combination” of the old regime and constitutionalism exists not only in present-day Russia, but also in present-day Germany and even in present-day England (the House of Lords; the Crown’s independence of the people’s representatives in matters of foreign policy, etc.). What, then, is the position taken up *in reality* (i.e., irrespective of good wishes and pious speeches) by the politician who declares that it is “quite sufficient” for a Russian to recognise what is true as regards Germany as well as England? Such a politician *in reality* assumes the position of a *liberal*, of a Cadet. Even a more or less consistent bourgeois

democrat in our country cannot, and does not, assume such a position. Martov's *last word*, his concluding *formula* which sums up the entire discussion among the liquidators, is a remarkably precise, a strikingly clear and exhaustively complete expression of *liberal* views smuggled in under a pseudo-Marxian flag.

When the liberals—not only the Cadets, but also a section of the Octobrists—say: It is *quite sufficient* for the theoretical substantiation and political justification of our activity to recognise the inherently contradictory combination of the old regime and constitutionalism, the liberals remain quite true to themselves. In these words they give a really precise, liberal formula, the formula of the liberal policy of 1908-10 (if not 1906-10). A Marxist, on the other hand, reveals his Marxism only when and to the extent that he explains the *inadequacy and falsity* of this formula, which eliminates those specific features which radically and in principle distinguish the Russian “contradictions” from those of the English and German. The liberal says: “It is quite sufficient to admit that in our country a great many things are in contradiction to constitutionalism.” The Marxist replies: “Such an admission is altogether inadequate. It is necessary to understand that there is no elementary, fundamental, cardinal, essential, necessary base for ‘constitutionalism’ *at all*. The basic error of liberalism consists precisely in that it declares that there is such a base, whereas it does not exist; and this error explains the impotence of liberalism and is explained by the impotence of bourgeois magnanimity.”

Translating this political antinomy into the language of economics, we may formulate it as follows. The liberal assumes that the path of economic (capitalist) development is already mapped out, defined, completed, that it is now only a matter of removing obstacles and contradictions from *that* path. The Marxist believes that this given path of capitalist development has not, up to now, provided a way out of the impasse, *despite* such undoubted bourgeois progress of economic evolution as is marked by November 22 [9], 1906 (or June 27 [14], 1910), as the Third Duma, etc.; and he believes that there is *another* path which is also a part of capitalist development, a path that can lead us on to the high road,

a path which must be pointed out, which must be explained, prepared, insisted upon, pursued, in spite of all the vacillation, lack of faith and pusillanimity of liberalism.

Martov argues with Larin as if he himself were much more to the "Left" than Larin. And many naive people allow themselves to be deceived and say: Certainly, Potresov, Levitsky and Larin are liquidators, certainly, they are of the extreme Right, something like our Roinaix; but Martov—Martov is certainly no liquidator! In reality, however, Martov's flamboyant phrases against Larin, against the "creeping" reformists, are only a blind, for in his *conclusion*, in his last word, in his *resumé*, Martov *actually* supports Larin. Martov is not more "Left" than Larin; he is only more diplomatic, more unprincipled than Larin; he conceals himself more cleverly in the gaudy rags of pseudo-Marxian phrases. Martov's conclusion: "It is quite sufficient" to recognise the contradictory combination, furnishes just that *confirmation* of liquidationism (and liberalism) which Larin requires. But Larin wants to justify this conclusion, to prove it, to think it out to the end, to make it a matter of principle. And Martov says to Larin, as Vollmar, Auer and the other "old birds" of opportunism used to say to the young opportunist Eduard Bernstein: "Dear Larin—that is to say: dear Eddy—you are an ass! Such things are done, but not talked about." "Dear Larin, for you and me, liquidationist practice should be 'quite sufficient,' the liberal recognition of the contradiction between the old regime and constitutionalism is 'quite sufficient'; but, for God's sake, don't go any further, don't 'deepen' the question, don't seek clarity and consistency of principles, don't make any appraisals of the 'present situation,' for *that exposes us both*. Let us act and not talk."

Martov teaches Larin how to be an opportunist.

"It is impossible to sit between two stools," says Larin to Martov, demanding an explanation and justification of the principles of liquidationism which is so dear to both of them.

"Well, what sort of opportunist are you," replies Martov, "if you don't know how to sit between two stools? What sort of opportunist are you if you insist on a precise, clear and direct justification of the principles of our practice? It is the business of a real

opportunist to sit between two stools, he must advocate the 'tactics-process' (remember Martynov and Krichevsky in the period of 1901), he must swim with the stream, cover up his traces, evade all matters of principle. Take Bernstein—he knows now (after the lessons given him by Vollmar, Auer, etc.) how to be a revisionist *without proposing* any amendments to the *orthodox* Erfurt *profession de foi*.<sup>1</sup> And we two must also know how to act as liquidators *without proposing* any amendments to the *orthodox* formal answer (of 1908) given to the 'vexed questions' of the day. In order to be a real opportunist, my dear, dear Larin, one must do the *creeping* in reality, in one's practice, in the way one goes about one's work; but, in words, before the public, in speeches, in the press, one must not only abstain from seeking theories justifying the act of *creeping*, but, on the contrary, one must shout the more loudly against those who creep, one must more assiduously vow and protest that we are not of the creeping kind."

Larin became silent. Probably, in the depths of his heart he could not help admitting that Martov was a more clever diplomat, a more subtle opportunist.

\* \* \*

We must examine still another aspect of Martov's concluding formula: "it is quite sufficient" to recognise the contradictory nature of the combination of the old regime and constitutionalism. Compare this formula with the *notorious* formula of V. Levitsky: "*Not hegemony, but a class party.*" (*Nasha Zarya*, No. 7.) In this formula Levitsky (the Larin of *Nasha Zarya*) expressed, only in a more direct, open, principled manner, what Potresov confused, glossed over, covered up and draped with pretentious phrases when, under the influence of Plekhanov's ultimatums, he *cleaned up* and revised the article he wrote *against* hegemony.

Martov's formula and that of Levitsky are two sides of the same medal. The object of the next article will be to explain this circumstance for the benefit of Martov who pretends not to under-

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the Erfurt Programme of the German Social-Democratic Party (adopted at the congress in Erfurt in 1891).—Ed

stand the connection between the idea of hegemony and the question of liquidationism.

P. S. The present article had already been sent to press when we received *Dyelo Zhizni*, No. 2, containing the conclusion of Y. Larin's article "Right Turn and About Turn!" Larin explains reformism, of which L. Martov "of course does not suspect" him, as clearly in the new liquidationist magazine as he explained it previously. For the present, we shall confine ourselves to quoting the *substance* of the reformist programme:

"A state of perplexity and uncertainty, when people simply do not know what to expect of the coming day, what tasks to set themselves—that is what results from indefinitely waiting moods, vague hopes of either a repetition of the revolution or of 'we shall see later on.' The immediate task is, not to indulge in fruitless waiting by the sea in expectation of fair weather, but to permeate broad circles with the leading idea that, in the new historical period of Russian life that has set in, the working class must organise itself 'not 'for revolution,' not 'in expectation of a revolution,' but simply for the determined and systematic *defence* of its special interests in all spheres of life; for the *gathering* and training of its forces for this many-sided and complex activity; for the *training* and accumulation in this way of socialist consciousness in general; for acquiring the *ability* to find one's bearings—to stand up for oneself—particularly in the complicated relations of the social classes of Russia during the coming constitutional renovation of the country after the economically inevitable self-exhaustion of feudal reaction. . . ." (P. 18.)

This tirade very precisely expresses the entire spirit and meaning of Larin's "programme" and of *all* the liquidationist writings in *Nasha Zarya*, *Vozrozhdeniye*, *Dyelo Zhizni* and others, including L. Martov's "quite sufficient" which we have examined above. This tirade is the purest and most complete reformism. We cannot dwell on it now; we cannot examine it here in such detail as it deserves. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to a brief remark. The Left Cadets, the non-party socialists, the petty-bourgeois democrats (like the "Narodni-Socialists") and the reformists of the type that profess to be Marxists, preach the following programme to the workers: gather your forces, train yourselves, learn, defend your interests *simply* in order to stand up for yourselves during the coming constitutional renovation. Such a programme curtails, narrows and emasculates the political tasks of the working class in the period 1908-11 in the same manner as the "Economists" emascu-

lated these tasks in the period 1896-1901. The old Economists, deluding themselves and others, liked to refer to Belgium (the predominance of reformism among the Belgians was recently brought to light by the excellent works of de Man and de Brouckère; we shall revert to these works another time); the Neo-Economists, *i.e.*, the liquidators, like to refer to the peaceful way in which a constitution was obtained in Austria in 1867. Both the old Economists and our liquidators choose instances, cases, episodes in the history of the labour movement and democracy in Europe, when the workers, for one reason or another, were weak, lacked class consciousness and were dependent on the bourgeoisie—and such instances they advance as a model for Russia. Both the Economists and the liquidators serve as conduits of bourgeois influence among the proletariat.

March 1911.



## THE NEW FACTION OF CONCILIATORS OR THE VIRTUOUS

THE *Information Bulletin* of the Foreign Technical Commission (No. 1, August 24 [11], 1911) and the leaflet *To All Members of the R.S.D.L.P.*, signed by "A Group of Party Bolsheviks," both of which appeared almost simultaneously in Paris, represent in regard to content an identical attack upon "official Bolshevism," or to use another expression, upon the "Leninist-Bolsheviks." These documents are full of wrath; they contain more angry exclamations and declamations than real content. Nevertheless, it is necessary to deal with them, for they touch upon the most important problems of our Party. And it is all the more natural for me to undertake the appraisal of the new faction because, first, it was I who wrote on these very questions in the name of *all* the Bolsheviks *exactly a year and a half ago* (see *Discussionny Listok*, No. 2<sup>1</sup>), and, secondly, because I am fully conscious of my responsibility for "official Bolshevism." As regards the expression "Leninist"—it is merely a clumsy attempt at sarcasm, intended to insinuate that the whole matter is merely one of the adherents of a *single* person! As a matter of fact, everybody knows full well that this is not a question of those who share my *personal* views on this or that aspect of Bolshevism.

The authors of the leaflet who sign themselves "Party Bolsheviks" also call themselves "non-factional Bolsheviks," remarking that "here" (in Paris) they are "rather ineptly" called conciliators. In reality, it is just this name, established over fifteen months ago, not only in Paris, not only abroad, but also in Russia, that contains the only correct expression of the political essence of the new faction. The reader will convince himself of this from what follows.

<sup>1</sup> See article "Notes of a Publicist, II. The 'Unity Crisis' in Our Party," in the present volume, pp. 37-70.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

Conciliationism is the sum total of moods, strivings and views which are *indissolubly* bound up with the very *essence* of the historical task set before the R.S.D.L.P. during the period of the counter-revolution of 1908-11. That is why, during that period, a number of Social-Democrats, starting from quite different premises, "fell" into conciliationism. Trotsky expressed conciliationism more consistently than anyone else. He was probably the only one who attempted to give this tendency a theoretical foundation. This is the foundation: factions and factionalism expressed the struggle of the intelligentsia "for influence over the immature proletariat." The proletariat is maturing and factionalism is perishing of itself. It is not the change in the relationships between the classes, not the evolution of the fundamental ideas of the two principal factions that lies at the base of the process of fusion of the factions; the whole question is one of the observance or non-observance of agreements concluded between *all* the "intellectual" factions. Wavering more to the side of the Bolsheviks at one moment and to that of the Mensheviks at another—Trotsky has been persistently propagating such an agreement (or compromise) between *all* and sundry factions for a long time.

The opposite view (see Nos. 2 and 3 of *Discussionny Listok*) is that the factions are generated by the relations between the classes in the Russian revolution. The Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks only formulated answers to the questions put to the proletariat by the objective realities of 1905-07. Therefore, only the inner evolution of *these* factions, the "strong" factions—strong because of their deep roots, strong because their ideas correspond to certain aspects of objective reality—only the inner evolution of precisely these factions is capable of securing a *real* fusion of the factions, *i.e.*, the creation of a genuinely and completely united party of proletarian Marxian socialism in Russia. Hence the practical conclusion: the *rapprochement* in practical work between these two strong factions alone—and only in so far as they are purged of the non-Social-Democratic tendencies of liquidationism and otzovism—really represents a Party policy, a policy that really brings about unity, not in an easy way, not smoothly, and by no means immediately, but in a real way as distinguished from

the endless quack promises of easy, smooth, immediate fusion of "all" factions.

These two views were observed even before the plenum, when in my discussions I suggested the slogan: "*rapprochement* between the two strong factions, and no whining over the dissolution of the factions." This was given publicity immediately after the plenum by *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*. I directly, definitely and systematically explained these two views in May 1910, i.e., a year and a half ago; moreover, I did this in the "general Party" arena, *Discussionny Listok* (No. 2). If the "conciliators," with whom we have disputed on these subjects since November 1909, have not found time so far to answer that article even *once*, did not even make one attempt to examine this question more or less systematically, to expound their views more or less openly and consistently—it is entirely their own fault. They call their factional document, which was published in *Listok* on behalf of a special group, a "public answer." But this public answer of those who remained *speechless* for over a year is *not* an answer to the question that was raised long ago, discussed long ago, and answered long ago in two fundamentally different ways; it is a most hopeless muddle, a most hopeless mixture of two irreconcilable answers. There is not a single proposition put forward by the authors of the leaflet which they do not immediately refute. There is not a single proposition on which the alleged Bolsheviks (who in reality are *inconsistent* Trotskyists) do not echo Trotsky's mistakes.

Indeed, look at the main ideas contained in the leaflet.

Who are its authors? They profess to be Bolsheviks who "do not share the organisational views of official Bolshevism." That looks as if it were an "opposition" *only* on the question of organisation, does it not? Read the next sentence: "...It is precisely the organisational questions, the questions of building up and restoring the Party, that are being advanced to the forefront now, as was the case a year and a half ago." This is altogether untrue, and constitutes the very error in principle which Trotsky made, and which I exposed, a year and a half ago. At the plenum, the organisational question could have appeared to be of paramount

importance only because and in so far as the *renunciation* of liquidationism by *all* factions *was taken* to be real, because the *Golos*-ites and the *Vperyod*-ists, "consoling" the Party, "signed" the resolutions *against* liquidationism and against otzovism. Trotsky's error was precisely that he continued to pass off the *apparent* for the real after February 1910, when *Nasha Zarya* finally unfurled the banner of liquidationism, and when the *Vperyod*-ists—in their notorious "N. School" —unfurled the banner of defence of otzovism. At the plenum, the acceptance of the apparent for the real *may* have been the result of self-delusion. But after the plenum, since the spring of 1910, Trotsky has been deceiving the workers in a most unprincipled and shameless manner by assuring them that the obstacles to unity were principally (if not wholly) of an organisational nature. This deceit is being continued in 1911 by the Paris conciliators, for to assert now that the organisational questions occupy first place is but a mockery of the truth. In reality, it is not the organisational question at all that is in the forefront now, but the question of the entire programme, the entire tactics and the whole character of the Party, or rather a question of *two* parties—the *Social-Democratic* Labour Party and the *Stolypin* Labour Party of Messrs. Potresov, Smirnov, Larin, Levitsky and Co. The Paris conciliators seem to have been asleep for the year and a half that has elapsed since the plenum, and in the meantime the *entire* struggle against the liquidators shifted, *both* in our camp *and* among the Party Mensheviks, from organisational questions to questions of whether *the Party is to be a Social-Democratic*—and not a liberal—labour party. To argue now, with the gentlemen of *Nasha Zarya* let us say, about organisational questions, about the relations between the legal and illegal organisations, would mean acting a comedy, for these gentlemen may fully recognise an "illegal" organisation like *Golos*, which is subservient to the liquidators! It has been said long ago that the Cadets are recognising and maintaining an illegal organisation that serves monarchist liberalism. The conciliators call themselves Bolsheviks, only to repeat, after a year and a half, Trotsky's errors which were exposed by the Bolsheviks (and it was particularly

stated that this was done in the name of Bolshevism *as a whole!*). Well, is this not abuse of established Party appellations? Are we not obliged, after this, to declare before all that the conciliators are not Bolsheviks at all, that they have nothing in common with Bolshevism, that they are simply inconsistent Trotskyists?

Read a little further: "One may disagree with the way official Bolshevism and the majority of the editors of the central organ understood the task of the struggle against liquidationism. . . ." Is it really possible seriously to assert that the "task of the struggle against liquidationism" is an organisational task? The conciliators themselves declare that they differ from the Bolsheviks *not only* on organisational questions! On what exactly do they differ? They are silent on this. Their "public answer" continues to remain the answer of speechless . . . or careless? . . . people. For a year and a half they did not attempt *even once* to correct "official Bolshevism" or to expound *their own* conception of the task of the struggle against liquidationism! And this struggle has been carried on by official Bolshevism for exactly three years, since August 1908. In comparing these well-known dates, we involuntarily seek for an explanation of this strange "speechlessness" of the conciliators, and this quest involuntarily recalls to our mind Trotsky and Yonov, who asserted that they *too* were opposed to the liquidators, but that they understood the task of struggling against them *differently*. This is ridiculous, comrades—to declare, three years after the struggle has started, that you understand this struggle in a different way! *Such* a difference in understanding is equivalent to not understanding at all.

Let us proceed further. The crux of the present Party crisis undoubtedly reduces itself to the question: either the complete separation of our Party, the R.S.D.L.P., from the liquidators (including the *Gólos*-ites) or the continuation of the policy of compromise with them. There is hardly a single Social-Democrat at all familiar with the case, who would deny that this question constitutes the *essence* of the entire Party situation today. What answer do the conciliators give to this question?

They write in the leaflet: "We are told that thereby" (*i.e.*, by

supporting the conference) "we are violating Party rules and are causing a split. We do not think so" (*sic!*). "But even if it were so, we would not be afraid of it." (Then follows a statement to the effect that the plenum was disrupted by the Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee, that the "Central Committee is the object of a gamble," that the "Party forms have begun to be filled with a factional content," etc.)

This answer can truly be called a "classical" specimen of ideological and political helplessness! Think of it: the accusation of causing a split has been made. And here a new faction, which claims to be able to show the way to the Party, declares publicly and in print: "we do not think so" (*i.e.*, you do not believe that there is and there will be a split?) "but. . ." but "we would not be afraid of it."

One can be quite certain that another example of *such* confusion could not be found in the history of political parties. If you "do not think" that there is and will be a split, then explain why! Explain *why* it is possible to work with the liquidators! Say straightforwardly that it is *possible*—and therefore necessary—to work with them.

But our conciliators not only do not say this; they say the opposite. In the editorial of the *Bulletin*, No. 1 (the footnote specifically remarks that this article was opposed by a Bolshevik who was an adherent of the Bolshevik platform, *i.e.*, of the resolution of the Second Paris Group), we read the following: ". . . It is a fact that joint work with the liquidators in Russia is impossible," while somewhat earlier it is admitted that it is "becoming more and more difficult to draw even the thinnest line of demarcation" between the *Golos*-ites and the liquidators.

Who can make head or tail of this? On the one hand, a most official statement is made on behalf of the Technical Commission (in which the conciliators and the Poles, who now support them, constitute a majority against us Bolsheviks) that *joint work is impossible*. In plain Russian this is called a declaration of a split. The term split has no other meaning. On the other hand, the same *Bulletin*, No. 1, proclaims that the Technical Commission was set

up "not for the purpose of causing a split, but for the purpose of averting it"—and the same conciliators write that they "do not think so" (that there is and will be a split).

Can one imagine a greater muddle?

If joint work is *impossible*, then the question can be explained to Social-Democrats; it can be justified in the eyes of Social-Democrats *either* by an outrageous violation of Party decisions and obligations on the part of a certain group of persons (and then a split with *that* group of persons is inevitable), *or* by a fundamental difference in principle, a difference which causes the *entire* work of a certain trend to be directed *away* from Social-Democracy (and then the split is inevitable with the whole trend). As is known both these cases apply: the plenum of 1910 declared it impossible to work with the liquidationist *trend*, while the split with the *Golos* group, which violated all its obligations and finally went over to the liquidators, is now taking place.

Anyone who deliberately says: "joint work is impossible," who has given any thought to this declaration and has grasped its fundamental principles, would inevitably concentrate all his attention and efforts on explaining these principles to the broadest masses so that they may be saved as soon and as completely as possible from all idle and harmful attempts to continue *any relations whatsoever* with those with whom it is *impossible* to work. But anyone who makes this statement and at the same time adds: "we do not think" there will be a split, "but we would not be afraid of it," reveals by his confused and timid language that *he is afraid of himself*, afraid of the step he has taken, afraid of the situation that has been created! The leaflet of the conciliators cannot but produce just such an impression. They want to apologise for something, they want to appear to be "kind" in the eyes of someone, they want to give someone a hint. . . . We shall see presently just what significance there is in their hints to *Vperyod* and *Pravda*. We must first finish with the question of the way the conciliators interpret the "review of the period that has elapsed since the plenum," the review made by the conference of the members of the Central Committee.

It is really necessary to *understand* this review, to understand

why it has become inevitable—otherwise our participation in events will be spontaneous, helpless, casual. Now see how this is *interpreted* by the conciliators. How do they answer the question of why the work and the decisions of the plenum, which were primarily of a unifying nature, resulted in a split between the Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee (liquidators) and the anti-liquidators? Our inconsistent Trotskyists have simply copied the answer to this from Trotsky and Yonov, and I am forced to repeat what I said in May of last year<sup>1</sup> against those consistent conciliators.

The answer of the conciliators is: it is the fault of factionalism, the factionalism of the Mensheviks, *Vperyod*-ists, *Pravda*-ists (we enumerate the factional groups in the order in which they appear in the leaflet) and, finally, of the “official representatives of Bolshevism” who “have probably excelled all these groups in their factional efforts.” The authors of the leaflet definitely apply the term *non-factional* only to themselves—the Paris conciliators. All are vicious—we are virtuous. The conciliators give no ideological reasons in explanation of the phenomenon in question. They do not point to any organisational or to any other distinguishing features of the groups which could give rise to this phenomenon. Nothing, simply nothing, absolutely no *explanation*, except that they refer to factionalism as a vice and to non-factionalism as a virtue. The only difference between the conciliators in Paris and Trotsky is that the former regard Trotsky as a factionalist and themselves as non-factional, whereas Trotsky holds the opposite view.

I cannot but confess that this formulation of the question, in which political phenomena are explained *only* by the viciousness of some and the virtue of others, always calls to mind the fine features of a much advertised celebrity at the sight of which one cannot help thinking: “Probably some rogue.”

What do you think of the following argument? Our conciliators are non-factional, virtuous; we Bolsheviks have excelled all groups in our factional efforts, *i.e.*, we are the most vicious. *Therefore*, the virtuous faction supported the most vicious Bolshevik

<sup>1</sup> See the article “Notes of a Publicist, II. The ‘Unity Crisis’ in Our Party,” in the present volume, pp. 37-70 —*Ed. Eng. ed.*



faction in the struggle against the Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee! There is something wrong here, comrades! You are getting yourselves mixed up more and more with every statement you make.

You make yourselves ridiculous when you and Trotsky hurl accusations of factionalism at one another, as if playing with a ball; you do not take the trouble to *think*: what is a faction? Try to give a definition and we predict that you will entangle yourselves still more, for you yourselves are but a vacillating, unprincipled faction that failed to understand what took place at the plenum and after the plenum.

A faction is an organisation within the Party, united, not by its place of work, language or other objective conditions, but by a special platform of views on Party questions. The authors of the leaflet are a faction, because the leaflet constitutes their platform (a very bad one; but there are factions with wrong platforms). They are a faction, for like every other organisation they are bound by internal discipline; their group appoints its representative to the Technical Commission and to the Organisation Committee by a majority of votes; it is their group that draws up and publishes the leaflet-programme, *and so on*. Such are the objective facts which condemn the shouts against factionalism *as hypocrisy*. Both Trotsky and the "inconsistent Trotskyists" maintain that they are not a faction because... "the only" object of their uniting (into a faction) is to abolish factions and to advocate their fusion, etc. But all such assurances are but self-praise and a cowardly game of hide-and-seek, for the simple reason that the *fact* of the existence of the faction is unaffected by any (even the most virtuous) *aim* of the faction. Every faction is convinced that its platform and policy are the *best* means of abolishing factions, for no one regards the existence of factions as ideal. The only difference is that factions with clear, consistent platforms *openly* defend *their* platform, while unprincipled factions *hide* behind cheap shouts about their virtue, about their non-factionalism.

What is the reason for the existence of factions in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party? The reason is that they are the continuation of the split of 1903-05. They are the result of the weakness of the local organisations which were *powerless* to prevent the transformation of literary groups, which were the expression of new trends and trendlets, into new "factions," *i.e.*, into organisations in which internal discipline takes first place. What real guarantee is there that factions will be abolished? *Only* the complete healing of the split, which dates from the time of the revolution (and *only* the purging of the two main factions of liquidationism and otzovism will lead to this), the creation of a proletarian organisation strong enough to force the minority to submit to the majority. As long as no such organisation exists, *only* an agreement of all the factions *could* accelerate the process of their disappearance. Hence, both the ideological merit of the plenum and its *conciliationist error* become clear. Its merit lies in its rejection of the ideas of liquidationism and otzovism; its mistake lies in indiscriminately concluding an agreement with persons and groups whose deeds do not correspond to their promises ("they signed the resolution"). The ideological *rapprochement* on the basis of the struggle against liquidationism and otzovism goes ahead—despite all obstacles and difficulties. The conciliationist mistake of the plenum<sup>1</sup> quite inevitably caused the failure of its conciliatory decisions, *i.e.*, the failure of the *alliance* with the *Golos*-ites. The rupture between the Bolsheviks (and subsequently the conference of the members of the Central Committee ) and the Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee is a *correction* of the conciliationist mistake of the plenum. The *rapprochement* of the factions which are actually *fighting* against liquidationism and otzovism will now proceed *despite* the forms decided on by the plenum, for these forms did not correspond to the content. Conciliationism in general, as well as the conciliationism of the plenum, failed, because the content of the work *separated* the liquidators from the Social-Democrats, and *no* forms, no diploma-

<sup>1</sup> See *Discussionny Listok*, No. 2 (article "Notes of a Publicist, II. The 'Unity Crisis' in Our Party," in the present volume, pp 37-70 —*Ed Eng ed* )

cy or game of the conciliators *could* overcome this process of separation.

From this—and only from this point of view, developed by me in May 1910—*everything* that took place after the plenum becomes intelligible, inevitable, resulting not from the “viciousness” of some and the “virtuousness” of others, but from the objective course of events, which isolates the liquidationist *tendency* and brushes aside all the intermediate groups and minor groups.

In order to obscure this undoubted, political fact—the complete *failure* of conciliationism—the conciliators are forced to resort to downright distortion of facts. Just listen:

“The factional policy of the Bolshevik-Leninists was particularly harmful because they had a majority in all the principal Party institutions, thanks to which their factional policy justified other trends in their organisational separatism and armed them against the official Party institutions.”

This tirade is nothing but a cowardly and belated “*justification*” of . . . liquidationism, for it was precisely the representatives of that tendency who always spoke of the “factionalism” of the Bolsheviks. This justification is belated because it was the *duty* of every real Party man (in contrast to persons who use the slogan “Party spirit” for self-advertisement) to act when this “factionalism” began, and not a year and a half later! The conciliators, the defenders of liquidationism, *could not* act and did not act earlier, because they had *no facts*. Now they are taking advantage of this “time of trouble” in order to present the unfounded phrases of the liquidators. But the facts are explicit and unambiguous: immediately after the plenum, in February 1910, Mr. Potresov unfurled the banner of liquidationism. Soon after, in February or March, Messrs. Mikhail, Roman and Yury betrayed the Party. Immediately after that, the *Golos*-ites started a campaign for *Golos* (see Plekhanov’s *Dnevnik* the day following the plenum) and resumed the publication of *Golos*. Immediately after that, the *Vperyod*-ists began to build up *their own* “school.” On the other hand, the *first* factional step the Bolsheviks took was to found *Rabochaya Gazeta* in September 1910, after Trotsky’s rupture with the representatives of the Central Committee.

Why did the conciliators resort to such a distortion of well-known facts? In order to give a hint to the liquidators, in order to curry favour with them. On the one hand, "joint work with the liquidators is impossible." On the other hand—they are "justified" by the factionalism of the Bolsheviks!! We ask any Social-Democrat not contaminated with the diplomacy of the *émigrés*: what political confidence do people deserve who are themselves entangled in such contradictions? All they deserved were the kisses with which *Golos* publicly rewarded them.

By "factionalism" the conciliators mean the *ruthlessness* of our polemics (for which the conciliators have censured us thousands of times at the general meetings in Paris) and the ruthlessness of our *exposure* of the liquidators (the conciliators were *against* the exposure of Mikhail, Yury and Roman). The conciliators have been defending and screening the liquidators all the time and have *never dared* to express their defence openly, either in *Discussionny Listok* or in any printed public appeal. And now they are using their impotence and cowardice to put a spoke in the wheel of the Party, which began emphatically to dissociate itself from the liquidators. The liquidators say: there is no liquidationism, it is an "exaggeration" on the part of the Bolsheviks (see the resolution of the Caucasian liquidators and the speeches by Trotsky). The conciliators say: it is impossible to work with the liquidators, *but . . .* but the factionalism of the Bolsheviks provides them with a "justification." Is it not clear that this ridiculous contradiction of subjective opinions has one, and only one, real meaning: the cowardly defence of liquidationism, the desire to trip up the Bolsheviks from behind and to lend support to the liquidators?

But this is not all by far. The worst and most malicious distortion of facts is the assertion that we had a "majority" in the "*principal Party institutions*." This crying untruth has only one purpose: to cover up the *political* bankruptcy of conciliationism. For, in reality, the Bolsheviks did *not* have a majority in *any* of the "*principal Party institutions*" after the plenum. On the contrary, it was the conciliators who had the majority. We challenge anyone to attempt to dispute the following facts. *After* the plenum there

were only three "principal Party institutions": 1) The Bureau of the Central Committee in Russia—composed chiefly of *conciliators*<sup>1</sup>; 2) the Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee—on which, from January to November 1910, the Bolsheviks were represented by a *conciliator*; since the Bundist and the Lett *officially* took up the conciliationist standpoint, the majority eleven months after the plenum was *conciliationist*; 3) the editorial board of the central organ—on which two "Bolshevik factionalists" were opposed by two *Golos*-ites; without the Pole there was *no* majority.

Why did the conciliators have to resort to a deliberate untruth? Precisely to conceal their head under their wing, to cover up the political *bankruptcy* of conciliationism. Conciliationism predominated at the plenum; it had a majority in all the principal practical centres of the Party after the plenum, and within a year and a half it suffered complete bankruptcy. It failed to "reconcile" anyone; it did not create anything anywhere; it vacillated helplessly from side to side, and for that it fully deserved the kisses of the *Golos*-ites.

It was particularly in *Russia* that the conciliators suffered utter bankruptcy. And the more assiduously and demagogically the Paris conciliators refer to Russia the more important is it to stress this. The *leit-motif* of the conciliators is that Russia is conciliationist in contrast with what we have abroad. Compare these *words* with the *facts*, and you will see that this is just hollow, cheap demagogy.

The facts show that for *more than a year* after the plenum there were *only* conciliators in the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee; they alone made official reports about the plenum, officially negotiated with the legalists; they alone appointed agents and sent them to the various institutions; they alone managed all the funds that were sent unquestioningly by the Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee; they alone negotiated with the "Russian" publicists who seemed promising as regards contributing to the muddle (*i.e.*, as regards conciliationism), etc.

<sup>1</sup> Of course, there are conciliators and conciliators, and surely not all the former members of the Russian Bureau could (and would) accept responsibility for all the pompous stupidities of the Paris conciliators who are merely the echoes of Trotsky.

And the result?

The result is nil. Not a single leaflet, not a single pronouncement, not a single organ of the press, not a single "reconciliation." As against this the Bolshevik "factionalists" have put their *Rabochaya Gazeta*, published abroad, on its feet after two issues (not to mention what only Mr. Martov talks about openly, thus helping the police). Conciliationism is nil, words, empty wishes (and attempts to trip up Bolshevism on the basis of these "conciliatory" wishes); "official" Bolshevism proved by deeds that it is absolutely preponderant precisely in Russia.

Is this an accident? The result of arrests? But arrests "spared" the liquidators, who *did no work* in the Party, while they mowed down Bolsheviks and conciliators alike.

No, this is not an accident, or the result of luck or success of *individuals*. It is the result of the bankruptcy of a political *tendency* which is false in its premises. The very *foundation* of conciliationism is false—the tendency to base the unity of the party of the proletariat on an alliance of all factions, including the anti-Social-Democratic, non-proletarian factions; false are its unprincipled "unity" schemes which lead to nothing; false are its phrases against "factions" (when *in fact* a new faction is formed)—phrases that are powerless to dissolve anti-Party 'factions, phrases that weaken the Bolshevik faction which bore nine-tenths of the brunt of the struggle against liquidationism and otzovism.

Trotsky provides us with an abundance of instances of unprincipled "unity" scheming. Recall, for example (I take one of the most recent instances), how he praised the Paris *Rabochaya Zhizn*, in the management of which the Paris conciliators and the *Golos*-ites had an equal share. What a delight!—wrote Trotsky—"neither Bolshevik, nor Menshevik, but revolutionary Social-Democrat." The poor hero of the phrase failed to notice one trifle: only that Social-Democrat is revolutionary who understands the *harmfulness* of anti-revolutionary, pseudo-Social-Democratism in a given country at a given time, *i.e.*, the harmfulness of liquidationism and otzovism in Russia of 1908-11, only one who *knows how* to

fight against similar non-Social-Democratic tendencies. By kissing *Rabochaya Zhizn* which waged no fight against the *non-revolutionary* Social-Democrats in Russia, Trotsky merely *revealed* the plan of the liquidators, whom he faithfully serves, *viz., equality* on the central organ means the termination of the *struggle* against the liquidators; the liquidators, in fact, enjoy full freedom to fight the Party; as for the Party—*let it be tied* hand and foot by the “equality” of the *Golos*-ites and the Party men in the central organ (and in the Central Committee). The victory of the liquidators would then be fully secured, and only the lackeys of the liquidators could carry out or defend such a plan.

Instances of unprincipled “unity” schemes, that promised peace and happiness without a long, stubborn, desperate struggle against the liquidators, were provided at the plenum by Yonov, Innokentiev and other conciliators. We saw another such instance in the leaflet of our conciliators who justify liquidationism on the grounds of Bolshevik “factionalism.” Yet another instance: their speeches about the Bolsheviks “isolating” themselves “*from other tendencies*” (*Vperyod, Pravda*) “*which share the platform of an illegal, Social-Democratic Party.*”

The italics in this remarkable tirade are ours. As the sun is reflected in a drop of water, so this tirade reflects the utter lack of principle in conciliationism—the base of its political impotence.

In the first place, do *Pravda* and *Vperyod* represent Social-Democratic tendencies? No, they do not, for *Vperyod* represents a *non-Social-Democratic* tendency (otzovism and Machism) and *Pravda* represents a tiny group, which has *not given* an independent and consistent answer to *any* important fundamental question of the revolution and counter-revolution. A tendency is constituted only by such a sum of political ideas as has become well-defined in regard to *all* the most important questions of *both* the revolution (for we have moved away but little from it and are dependent on it in all respects) *and* the counter-revolution; ideas which, moreover, have proved their right to existence as a tendency by being widely disseminated among broad strata of the working class. Both Menshevism and Bolshevism are Social-Democratic tendencies; this has been proved by the experience of the revolution, by

the eight years' history of the labour movement. As for group-lets not representing any *tendency*—there were plenty during that period, just as there were plenty before. To confuse a tendency with grouplets means condemning oneself to *intrigue* in Party politics. The appearance of grouplets devoid of principle, their ephemeral existence, their efforts to have “their say,” their “relations” with each other as separate powers—are the very basis of the intriguing that is going on abroad, and from this there is not nor can there be any salvation, except by strictly adhering to consistent principles that have been tested by the experience of the long history of the labour movement.

Secondly—and here we at once observe the practical transformation of the conciliators' lack of principle into intriguing—the leaflet of the Parisians utters a downright and deliberate untruth when it declares: “Otzovism no longer has open adherents and advocates in our Party.” This is an untruth, as everybody knows. This untruth is refuted by documentary evidence in *Vperyod*, No. 3 (May 1911), which *openly* states that otzovism is a “completely *legitimate tendency* within our Party.” (P. 78.) Or will our very wise conciliators assert that such a declaration is *not* a *defence* of otzovism?

Now that people cannot justify their close association with this or that grouplet on principle they are compelled to resort to a policy of petty lies, petty flattery, nods, winks, *i.e.*, to what in its totality forms the concept intrigue. *Vperyod* praises the conciliators; the conciliators praise *Vperyod* and falsely reassure the Party as regards otzovism. And as a result there is bargaining and haggling over positions and petty positions with the *defenders* of otzovism, with the *violators of all* the decisions of the plenum. Secretly they assist the liquidators; secretly they assist the otzovists—such is the destiny of conciliationism, and such is the substance of their impotent and miserable intriguing.

And thirdly—“ . . . joint work with the liquidators in Russia is impossible.” Even the conciliators had to admit this truth. The question is—do the *Vperyod* and *Pravda* grouplets admit this truth? They not only refuse to admit it—they maintain the very *opposite*, they openly demand “joint work” with the liquidators.



and they openly *engage in such work* (see for example the report of the Second *Vperyod* School). The question is—is there even a shadow of principle *and of honesty* in proclaiming the policy of a *rapprochement* with groups which give *diametrically opposite* answers to *fundamental* questions?—for the question of liquidationism has been recognised by an unambiguous and unanimous resolution of the plenum as one of the fundamental questions. Obviously not; we are confronted here with an ideological chasm, and all attempts to span it with a wordy bridge, with a diplomatic bridge, inevitably, irrespective of the most pious intentions of Ivan Ivanovich and Ivan Nikiforovich,<sup>1</sup> condemn them to intrigues.

And until it is shown and proved to us, on the basis of solid facts and of a review of the most important questions, that *Vperyod* and *Pravda* represent *Social-Democratic tendencies* (and no one, during the year and a half following the plenum, even tried to prove this, and it cannot be proved), we shall not tire of explaining to the workers the harmfulness of those unprincipled stratagems, of those intriguing subterfuges, to which the *rapprochement* with *Vperyod* and *Pravda* preached by the conciliators leads. *Isolation* from these non-Social-Democratic and unprincipled grouplets which are aiding the liquidators is the *first duty* of the revolutionary Social-Democrats. To appeal to the Russian workers connected with *Vperyod* and *Pravda* over the heads of these grouplets, and against them—such is the policy which has been and is being pursued by Bolshevism and which it will pursue to the end despite all obstacles.

I have said that after the year and a half during which conciliationism *predominated* in the Party centres, it has suffered complete political bankruptcy. The usual answer to this is: yes, but that is because you factionalists were hampering us (see the letter of the conciliators—not Bolsheviks—Hermann and Arkady in *Pravda*, No. 20 ).

Now the *political* bankruptcy of a tendency or of a grouplet

<sup>1</sup> Two characters of Gogol's tale, *The Story of How Ivan Ivanovich Quarrelled With Ivan Nikiforovich*. These two quarrelled over mere trifles—*Ed Eng. ed.*

lies precisely in the fact that *everything* "hampers" it, *everything* turns against it—because it wrongly estimated this "*everything*," because it took as its basis empty words, sighs, regrets, whining.

Whereas in our case, gentlemen, *everything* and *everybody* came to our assistance—and that is the guarantee of our success. We were assisted by Messrs. Potresovs, Larins, Levitskys, for they *could not* open their mouths without confirming our arguments about liquidationism. We were assisted by Messrs. Martovs and Dans, for they *compelled* everyone to agree with our view that the *Golos*-ites and the liquidators are one and the same. We were assisted by Plekhanov *to the very extent* that he exposed the liquidators and pointed out the "loopholes" left open "for the liquidators" in the resolutions of the plenum (*by the conciliators*), ridiculed the "puffy" and "integral" passages in these resolutions (*passed by the conciliators against us*). We were assisted by the Russian conciliators who "invited" Mikhail, Yury and Roman, while indulging in abusive attacks against Lenin (see *Golos*), thereby confirming the fact that the refusal of the liquidators was *not* due to the viciousness of the "factionalists." Dear conciliators, how is it that notwithstanding your virtuousness, you were hampered by everybody, whereas everyone helped us in spite of all our factional viciousness?

It was because the policy of your grouplet hinged only on a phrase, often a very well-meaning and well-intentioned phrase, but empty none the less. A real approach to unity is created *only* by a *rapprochement* between the *strong* factions, strong in their ideological consistency and influence over the masses, and tested by the experience of the revolution.

Even now, your outbursts against factionalism remain a mere phrase, because *you yourselves are a faction*, one of the worst, least reliable, unprincipled factions. Your high-sounding, sweeping pronouncement (in the *Information Bulletin*)—"not a centime to the factions"—was a mere phrase. Had you meant it seriously, could you have spent "*centimes*" on the publication of the leaflet which is the platform of a new grouplet? Had you meant it seriously, could you have kept quiet at the sight of such *factional* organs as *Rabochaya Gazeta* and *Dnevnik Sotsial-Demokrata*?

Could you have abstained from publicly demanding that they be closed down?<sup>1</sup> Had you demanded this, had you seriously stipulated such a condition, you would simply have been ridiculed. However, if, being well aware of this, you confine yourselves to languid sighs, does it not prove over and over again that your conciliationism is hanging in the air?

The disarming of the factions is possible only on the basis of reciprocity—otherwise it is a reactionary slogan, extremely harmful to the cause of the proletariat, a demagogical slogan, for it only *faciliates* the irreconcilable struggle of the conciliators against the Party. Anyone who advances this slogan now, *after* the attempt of the plenum to apply it has failed, *after* the attempt to amalgamate (the factions) was thwarted by the *Golos* and *Vperyod* factions, anyone who does this without daring to repeat the condition of reciprocity, without even trying to state it clearly, to determine the methods of control over its *actual fulfilment*—is simply intoxicating himself with the sound of sweet words.

Bolsheviks, unite—you are the only bulwark of a consistent and decisive struggle against liquidationism and otzovism.

Pursue the policy of *rapprochement* with *anti*-liquidationist Menshevism, a policy tested by practice, confirmed by experience—such is our slogan. It is a policy that does not promise a land flowing with milk and honey, which cannot be attained in the period of collapse and disintegration of “universal peace,” but it is a policy that in the process of work really furthers the *rapprochement* of *tendencies* which represent *all* that is strong, sound and vital in the *proletarian* movement.

The role of the conciliators during the period of counter-revolution may be characterised by the following picture. With immense efforts the Bolsheviks are pulling our Party waggon up a steep slope. The liquidator-*Golos*-ites are trying with all their might to drag it downhill again. *In the waggon* sits a conciliator; he

<sup>1</sup> In fairness we should state that the Paris conciliators, who have now issued their leaflet, were *opposed to* the launching of *Rabochaya Gazeta*; they *left the first meeting* to which they were invited by its editors. We regret that they did not help us (help to expose the futility of conciliationism) by openly denouncing *Rabochaya Gazeta*.

is a picture of tenderness. He has such a sweet, sweet face, like that of Jesus. He looks the very incarnation of virtue. And modestly dropping his eyes and raising his hands he exclaims: "I thank thee, Lord, that I am not like one of *these*"—a nod in the direction of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks—"vicious factionalists who hinder all progress." But the waggon moves slowly forward and in the waggon sits the conciliator. When the Bolshevik factionalists *smashed* the liquidationist Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee, thereby clearing the ground for the construction of a new house, for a *bloc* (or at least a temporary alliance) of *Party* factions, this house was entered by the conciliators who (cursing the factionalist Bolsheviks) sprinkled the new abode . . . with the holy water of sugary speeches about non-factionalism!

\* \* \*

What would have become of the historically memorable work of the old *Iskra*, if, instead of waging a consistent, irreconcilable campaign against the principles of Economism and "Struveism," it had agreed to some *bloc*, alliance or "fusion" of *all* groups, small and otherwise, which were as numerous abroad in those days as they are today?

And yet the differences between our epoch and the epoch of the old *Iskra* increase manifold the harmfulness of unprincipled and phrasemongering conciliationism.

The first difference: we have risen to a far higher level, in the development of capitalism and of the bourgeoisie, as well as in the clarity of the class struggle in Russia. There is already (for the *first time* in Russia) a certain objective soil for the *liberal* labour policy of Messrs. Potresov, Levitsky, Larin and Co. The Stolypin liberalism of the "Cadets" and the Stolypin Labour Party are already in the process of formation. All the more harmful in practice are conciliationist phrases and intrigues with the grouplets abroad which support the liquidators.

The second difference: the immeasurably higher level of development of the proletariat, of its class consciousness and class solidarity. All the more harmful is the *artificial* support given by the conciliators to the ephemeral grouplets abroad (*Vperyod*,

*Pravda*, etc.), which have not created and are unable to create any tendency in Social-Democracy.

The third difference: during the *Iskra* period there were illegal organisations of the Economists in Russia, which had to be smashed and split up in order to unite the revolutionary Social-Democrats against them. Today, there are *no* parallel illegal organisations; today it is only a question of fighting the segregated *legal* groups. And this process of segregation (even the conciliators are forced to admit it) is retarded by them, by their political *game* with the factions abroad which are *unwilling* to work and incapable of working on the lines of such delimitation.

Bolshevism has "got over" the otzovist sickness, the revolutionary phrase, the playing at "Leftism," the swinging from Social-Democracy to the Left. The otzovists came out as a faction when it was *no longer* possible to "recall" the Duma Social-Democrats.

Bolshevism will also get over the "conciliationist" sickness, the wavering in the direction of liquidationism (for in reality the conciliators were always a plaything in the hands of the liquidators). The conciliators are also hopelessly belated. They came out as a faction after the one and a half years of *domination* of conciliationism after the plenum had exhausted itself and there was no one left to conciliate.

P.S. The present feuilleton was written more than a month ago. It criticises the "theory" of the conciliators. The "practice" of the conciliators, which found expression in the hopeless, absurd, futile and shameful squabbles which pervade the columns of the 'conciliators' and the Poles' *Bulletin*, No. 2, is not worth wasting a single word on.

October 1911.

## THE CLIMAX OF THE PARTY CRISIS

Two years ago one could find in the Social-Democratic press utterances on the "unity crisis" in the Party.<sup>1</sup> The counter-revolutionary epoch with its ruin and disintegration caused new regroupings and splits, a new sharpening of the struggle abroad, and not a few of those who lacked faith or whose nerves were weak lost heart in face of the difficult internal condition of the Social-Democratic Labour Party. Now, with the formation of the Russian Organisation Committee (R.O.C.), we are obviously approaching, if not the end of the crisis, then at any rate a new and decisive turn for the better in the development of the Party. It will therefore be opportune to attempt a general review of the past period of inner Party evolution and of the prospects for the immediate future.

The revolution left the R.S.D.L.P. in the form of three separate, autonomous, national, Social-Democratic organisations, and two Russian factions proper. The experience of the years 1905, 1906 and 1907, which were unprecedented for their abundance of events, demonstrated that these factions were deeply rooted in the tendencies of development of the proletariat, in the general conditions of its life in this period of bourgeois revolution. The counter-revolution once again drove us from the mountain, up which we had climbed so high, down into the valley. The proletariat had to re-group its ranks and gather its forces anew in the midst of Stolypin's gallows and the "*Vekh*" jeremiads.

The new situation gave rise to a new grouping of tendencies in the Social-Democratic Party. In both the new factions—under the severe pressure of the adverse times—a process of segregation commenced of the least stable Social-Democratic elements, of the var-

<sup>1</sup> See the article "Notes of a Publicist, II. The 'Unity Crisis' in Our Party," in the present volume, pp. 37-70.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

ious *bourgeois fellow-travellers* of the proletariat. Two tendencies—liquidationism and otzovism—expressed this *departure* from Social-Democracy most strikingly. And it was these that inevitably gave rise to the tendency of *rapprochement* between the main cores of both the factions which had remained true to Marxism. Such was the state of affairs from which emerged the plenum of January 1910—the source of the pluses and minuses, of the steps forward and wavering backward in the subsequent development of the Social-Democratic Party.

To this very day, many have failed to understand properly the undeniable ideological merit of the work performed by the plenum, and the great “conciliationist” mistake it committed. But unless this is understood it is impossible to understand anything at all in the present Party situation. We must therefore once again pause to explain the source of the present crisis.

The following quotation from an article by a conciliator, written just before the plenum and published immediately after it, may help to make this clearer than would long disquisitions or quotations from more direct and more numerous “documents.” One of the leaders of conciliationism which dominated the plenum—Comrade Yonov, a Bundist—wrote the following in an article “Is Party Unity Possible?” published in *Discussionny Listok*, No. 1 (April 1 [March 19], 1910; on page 6 we read the editors’ note: “the article was written before the plenum”):

“However harmful otzovism and liquidationism, as such, may be to the Party, their beneficial effect on the factions seems to be beyond doubt. Pathology knows two kinds of ulcers: malignant and benign. A benign ulcer is an ailment useful to the organism. In the process of ulceration, it draws all kinds of noxious elements from the entire organism and thus contributes to its cure. I believe that a similar role was played by liquidationism in regard to Menshevism and by otzovism-ultimatumism in regard to Bolshevism.”

Such is the estimate of the case made by a “conciliator” during the plenum,<sup>1</sup> which describes *exactly* the psychology and the ideas of conciliationism that triumphed at the plenum. In the above quo-

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the plenum of the Central Committee in 1910, which is referred to in the same article: “Notes of a Publicist, II. The ‘Unity Crisis’ in Our Party.” See present volume, pp. 37-70 —*Ed. Eng. ed.*

tation the main idea is correct; it is a thousand times correct, and just because it is correct the Bolsheviks (who even before the plenum had fully developed the struggle against liquidationism and against otzovism) *could not* break with the conciliators at the plenum. They could not, because there was agreement on the main idea; it was only on the question of the form in which this main idea should be applied that there were differences. The form will become subordinated to the content—thought the Bolsheviks, and they proved to be right, though this “adaptation of form to content” cost the Party *two years*, which were almost “wasted,” owing to the mistake committed by the conciliators.

What was the nature of this mistake? It was that the conciliators recognised all and sundry tendencies on their mere promise to purge themselves, instead of recognising only those tendencies which are purging themselves (and only in so far as they do purge themselves) of their “ulcers.” The *Vperyod*-ists, the *Golos*-ites and Trotsky all “signed” the resolution against otzovism and liquidationism—that is, they promised to “purge themselves”—and that was the end of it! The conciliators “believed” the promise and entangled the Party with non-Party grouplets, “ulcerous” as they themselves admitted. From the point of view of practical politics this was childishness, while from a deeper point of view it was ideologically void, unprincipled and full of intrigue. Indeed, those who were seriously convinced that liquidationism and otzovism-ultimatumism were ulcers could not but understand that as the ulcers mature they must *draw* out and drain the noxious elements from the organism; and they would not contribute to the poisoning of the organism by attempts to drive the “ulcerous” poisons inside.

The first year that elapsed after the plenum revealed in practice the ideological hollowness of the conciliators. As a matter of fact, all Party work (purging, the healing of ulcers) during the whole of that year was done by the Bolsheviks and the Plekhanovists. Both *Sotsial-Demokrat* and *Rabochaya Gazeta* (after the expulsion of the Central Committee’s representative by Trotsky ) prove that



fact. Some of the generally known, legally issued publications of 1910 also bear out that fact. These are not words but facts: joint work in the leading bodies of the Party.

During that year (1910), the *Golos*-ites, the *Vperyod*-ists and Trotsky, all in fact, estranged themselves from the Party and moved precisely in the direction of liquidationism and otzovism-ultimatumism. The "benign ulcers" remained ulcers which behaved malignantly, inasmuch as they did not drain the "noxious elements" from the organism of the Party, but continued to contaminate that organism, keeping it in a diseased condition and rendering it incapable of doing Party work. This Party work (in literature, which was accessible to all) was conducted by the Bolsheviks and the Plekhanovists *in spite of* the "conciliatory" resolutions and the collegiums formed by the plenum, and not in conjunction with the *Golos*-ites and the *Vperyod*-ists, but *against* them (because it was impossible to work in conjunction with the liquidators and otzovists-ultimatumists).

And what about the work in Russia? Not a single meeting of the Central Committee was held during the whole year! Why? Because the members of the Central Committee in Russia (conciliators who well deserved the kisses of *Golos Likvidatorov*<sup>1</sup>) kept on "inviting" the liquidators for a year and a year and a quarter but never got them to "accept the invitation." Unfortunately, our good conciliators made no provisions at the plenum for bringing people to the Central Committee "under guard." As a result the Party found itself in the absurd and shameful position, which the Bolsheviks had predicted at the plenum when they fought the trustfulness and *naiveté* of the conciliators, namely: work in Russia is at a standstill, the Party is tied up, while a disgusting stream of liberal and anarchistic attacks on the Party pours forth from the pages of *Nasha Zarya* and *Vperyod*! Mikhail, Roman and Yury, on the one side, the otzovists and the "God-creators," on the other, are doing their utmost to ruin Social-Democratic work, while the conciliationist members of the Central Committee are "inviting" the liquidators and are "waiting" for them!

<sup>1</sup> *Voice of the Liquidators.*—Ed. Eng. ed.

By their "declaration" of December 18 [5], 1910, the Bolsheviks openly and formally declared that they cancelled the agreement with all the other factions. The violation of the "peace" made at the plenum, its violation by *Golos*, *Vperyod* and Trotsky, had become a fully recognised fact.

About half a year was spent (until June 1911) in attempts to convene a plenum abroad, which under the agreement was to be convened within not more than three months. The liquidators (*Golos*-ites—Bundists—Schwarz) likewise prevented the convening of the plenum that was to have been held abroad. Thereupon the *bloc* of three groups—the Bolsheviks, the Poles and the conciliators—made a final attempt to save the situation: to call a conference and to form a Russian Organisation Committee. As heretofore, the Bolsheviks were in a minority: from January 1910 to June 1911, the liquidators were predominant (in the Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee: the *Golos*-ites—a Bundist—Schwarz; in Russia: the conciliators who had been continually "inviting" the liquidators); from June 1911 to November 14 [1], 1911 (the period fixed by the trustees), the conciliators, who were joined by the Poles, were predominant.

This is how matters stood: both money and the sending of agents were in the hands of Tyszko and Mark<sup>1</sup> (the leader of the Paris conciliators); the only assurance the Bolsheviks received was consent that they too be sent on work. The differences arising out of the plenum reduced themselves to the last point, which it was impossible to evade: whether one was to work with all one's energy, without "waiting" for anyone, without "inviting" anyone (anyone who wishes and is able to work in a Social-Democratic fashion needs no invitations!), or whether one was to continue bargaining and haggling with Trotsky, *Vperyod*, etc. The Bolsheviks chose the first path, a fact which they had already openly and directly declared at the Paris Conference of the Central Committee members. Tyszko and Co. chose (and foisted on both the Technical Commission and the Foreign Organisation Committee) the second path, which, as was shown in detail in the feuilleton of *Sot-*

<sup>1</sup> Mark—Zommer-Lyubimov.—*Ed.*

*sial-Demokrat*, No. 24,<sup>1</sup> was objectively nothing but empty and miserable intrigue.

The result is now clear to all. By November 14 [1], the *Russian Organisation Committee* was formed. In reality, it was created by the Bolsheviks and by the Party Mensheviks in Russia. "The alliance of the two strong factions" (strong in their ideological solidity and in their work of purging "ulcers"), against which the weak-minded people at the plenum and after the plenum were so enraged (see *Golos*, *Vperyod*, *Otkliki Bunda*,<sup>2</sup> *Pravda*, etc.), became a fact. In such exemplary and outstanding Social-Democratic organisations as were the Baku and the Kiev organisations for the Russia of 1910 and 1911, this alliance, to the great joy of the Bolsheviks, was transformed into an almost complete fusion, into a single indissoluble organism of the Party Social-Democrats.

After a test of two years' experience, the snivelling for the dissolution of "all" factions turned out to be but a miserable phrase of empty-headed people who had been fooled by Messrs. Potresovs and the otzovists. "The alliance of the two strong factions" performed its work, and approached very closely—in the case of the above-mentioned exemplary organisations—to a complete fusion into a single party. The waverings of the Party Mensheviks abroad can no longer alter this accomplished fact.

The two years following the plenum, which to many sceptics or dilettantes in Social-Democracy, who do not wish to understand the devilish difficulty of the task, seem to be years of useless, hopeless, senseless squabbles, of disintegration and ruin, were in reality years in which the Social-Democratic Parties were led out of the swamp of liquidationist and otzovist waverings on to the high road. The year 1910 was a year of joint work of the Bolsheviks with the Party Mensheviks in *all* the leading (both official and unofficial, legal and illegal) bodies of the Party; this was the first step of the "alliance of the two strong factions" towards ideological preparation, the gathering of the forces under a single banner, the anti-liquidationist and anti-otzovist banner. The year 1911 witnessed the

<sup>1</sup> Lenin refers to his article "The New Faction of Conciliators or the Virtuous." See present volume, pp 92-112.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> *Echoes of the Bund*.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

second step—the creation of the Russian Organisation Committee. The fact that a Party Menshevik presided at its first meeting is significant: the second step—the creation of an actually functioning centre in Russia—has now been taken. The locomotive has been raised and placed on the rails.

For the first time after *four* years of ruin and disintegration, a Social-Democratic centre has met together in Russia—in spite of the incredible persecution of the police and the unheard-of intrigues of the *Golos*-ites, *Vperyod*-ists, conciliators, Poles and *tutti quanti*. For the first time a leaflet has appeared in Russia addressed to the Party by that centre. For the first time the work of re-establishing the local underground organisations has systematically and thoroughly covered both capitals,<sup>1</sup> the Volga Region, the Urals, the Caucasus, Kiev, Ekaterinoslav, Rostov, Nikolayev (all in about three months, from July to October 1911)—for the Russian Organisation Committee assembled<sup>o</sup> only *after* having visited all these places, its first meeting having taken place *simultaneously* with the restoration of the St. Petersburg Party Committee and with a series of workers' meetings arranged by it, with the passing of resolutions by the Moscow city district in favour of the Party, etc.

Of course it would be unpardonable *naïveté* to indulge in light-hearted optimism; we are still confronted with enormous difficulties; police aggression has increased tenfold since the publication of the first Russian leaflet by the Social-Democratic centre; it is possible to foresee long and hard months, new arrests, new interruptions in our work. But the main thing has been accomplished. The banner has been unfurled, the workers' circles all over Russia are being drawn to it, and no counter-revolutionary attack can possibly haul it down.

\* \* \*

What was the answer of the conciliators abroad, and of Tyszko and Leder,<sup>2</sup> to this gigantic stride forward in the work in Russia? A last flare-up of miserable intrigue. The "process of ulceration," which was so prophetically foretold by Yonov on the eve of the

<sup>1</sup> I.e., St. Petersburg and Moscow.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

plenum, is unpleasant, no doubt. But anyone who fails to understand that this unsightly process makes Social-Democracy *healthier* should not apply himself to revolutionary work! The Technical Commission and the Foreign Organisation Committee refuse to submit to the Russian Organisation Committee. The Bolsheviks, of course, turn their backs upon intrigues abroad with contempt. Thereupon vacillation sets in: at the beginning of November, a report on the convocation of the Russian Organisation Committee is delivered to the fragments of the Foreign Organisation Committee (two Poles and one conciliator). The report depicts the entire work so comprehensively that the opponents of the Bolsheviks, the conciliators whom *Golos* praised, *are forced* to recognise the Russian Organisation Committee. The Foreign Organisation Committee passes a resolution on November 26 [13], 1911: "To be guided by the decisions of the Russian Organisation Committee." Four-fifths of the money in possession of the Foreign Organisation Committee is transferred to the Russian Organisation Committee, which indicates that the Poles and conciliators themselves are *not* able to cast a shadow of doubt on the seriousness of the whole undertaking.

And, nevertheless, a few days later, both the Technical Commission and the Foreign Organisation Committee again refuse to submit to the Russian Organisation Committee!! What is the meaning of this game?

The editors of the central organ are in possession of a document which will be submitted to the conference and which reveals that Tyszko is agitating for non-participation in the Russian Organisation Committee and for non-participation in the conference.

Is it possible to imagine intrigue more vile than this? In the Technical Commission and in the Foreign Organisation Committee they undertook to help convene the conference and to form the Russian Organisation Committee. They boasted that they would invite "all," but invited no one (though, being in the majority, they had the right to invite and to put up any conditions). They could find no one to do the work except the Bolsheviks and the Party Mensheviks. They suffered utter defeat in the field they themselves had chosen. They sank so low as to attempt to "trip up" the very Russian Organisation Committee to which they had voluntarily sur-

rendered, as to a fully authorised centre, four-fifths of their funds for convening the conference!!

Yes, an ulcer is an unpleasant affair, especially when it is "in the process of ulceration." In No. 24 of the central organ<sup>1</sup> it has already been shown why the theoreticians of an alliance of all and sundry groups abroad can do nothing else than carry on intrigues. Now the Russian Social-Democratic workers will make their choice without any difficulty: whether to defend their Russian Organisation Committee and their conference, or to allow Tyszko, Leder and Co. to sabotage their conference by intrigues. The intriguers have ruined themselves—that is a fact; Tyszko and Leder have already gone into the history of the R.S.D.L.P. with a convict's badge; but they will never succeed in hindering the conference or in undermining the Russian Organisation Committee.

What about the liquidators? For a year and a half, from January 1910 to June 1911, when they had a majority in the Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee and faithful "friends" in the persons of the conciliators in the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee, they did nothing, absolutely nothing, to further the work in Russia! When they were in the majority—work was at a standstill. But when the Bolsheviks broke up the liquidationist Foreign Bureau of the Central Committee and proceeded to convene the conference, the liquidators began to stir. And it is very interesting to note the form in which that "stir" expressed itself. The Bundists who have always very faithfully served the liquidators were recently struck with the desire to take advantage of the present "time of trouble" (among the Letts, for instance, the issue of the struggle between the two tendencies—liquidationist and Party—has not yet been determined); they got hold of a Caucasian somewhere and the whole company went to the city of Z. to snatch signatures for the resolutions drafted by Trotsky and Dan in Café Bubenbergr (in Berne, August 1911). But they failed to find the leading Lettish organisation; they failed to get the signatures and no document with the high-sounding heading "Organ-

<sup>1</sup> See the article "The New Faction of Conciliators or the Virtuous," in this volume, pp. 92-112.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

isation Committee of the Three Strongest Organisations" was got out by them. Such are the facts.<sup>1</sup>

Let the Russian workers learn about the way the Bundists are trying to break up the Russian Organisation Committee in Russia! Just think: at a time when the comrades who were making the preparations for the conference were touring the Urals, the Volga Region, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Ekaterinoslav, Rostov, Tiflis, Baku—the Bundists "got hold of" a "Caucasian" (probably one of those committee men who were in possession of the "seal" of the Regional Caucasian Committee and who, in December 1908, sent Dan and Axelrod as representatives to the conference of the R.S.D.L.P.) and proceeded to "snatch signatures" from the Letts. Not much more was needed to cause this gang of intriguers, who serve the liquidators and who are absolutely alien to all work in Russia, to come out as the "Organisation Committee" of "three organisations" (including the two "strongest" possessors of the seal!). Or perhaps the Bundist gentlemen and the Caucasian will please inform the Party what Russian organisations they visited, when exactly they made these journeys, where they restored the work, and where they made reports? Do try and tell us, dear fellows!

And the past masters of diplomacy abroad, with the serious mien of experts, pass judgment: "one must not isolate oneself," "it is necessary to talk things over with the Bund and with the Regional Caucasian Committee."

Oh, ye comedians!

Let those who are wavering now, who regret the "isolation" of the Bolsheviks, learn and ponder over the significance of the history of the Party during these past two years. Oh, *this* isolation makes us feel better than we have ever felt before, for we have cut off the bunch of intriguing nonentities abroad, and have helped to consolidate the ranks of the Russian Social-Democratic workers of St.

<sup>1</sup> Apart from the never-lose-heart Bundists, the *Vperyod*-ists too galloped off to snatch resolutions. From that grouplet—by no means *otzovist*, heaven forbid!—there galloped off a well-known *otzovist*; he "galloped" through Kiev, Moscow, Nizhni-Novgorod, "reconciled himself" with the conciliators, and went away without achieving anything anywhere. It is said that the *Vperyod* group blames the unsatisfactory god devised by Lunacharsky for its failure and that it passed a unanimous resolution to devise a better god.

Petersburg, Moscow, the Urals, the Volga Region, the Caucasus and the South!

Whoever complains about isolation understands absolutely nothing of the great ideological work accomplished by the plenum or of its conciliationist mistake. For a year and a half after the plenum there was an appearance of unity abroad and complete stagnation in the Social-Democratic work in Russia. In six months or four months of 1911 the seemingly extreme isolation of the Bolsheviks for the first time gave an impetus to the Social-Democratic work in Russia, for the first time restored the Social-Democratic centre of Russia.

Those who have not yet understood the ideological rottenness and deadliness of such "ulcers" as liquidationism and otzovism will now understand it from the history of the impotent squabbles and miserable intrigue to which the grouplets of *Golos* and *Vperyod* have sunk, dragging with them, in their fall, all those who attempted to defend them.

To work, comrades, Party Social-Democrats! Shake off the last remnants of your contacts with non-Social-Democratic tendencies and the grouplets that foster them in spite of the decisions of the Party. Rally round the Russian Organisation Committee, help it convene a conference and strengthen local work. The R.S.D.L.P. has gone through a serious illness; the crisis is passing.

Long live the united, illegal, revolutionary Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party!

December 1911.



## CONTROVERSIAL QUESTIONS

### AN OPEN PARTY AND THE MARXISTS

#### I. THE DECISION OF 1908

To many workers the struggle that is now going on between *Pravda*<sup>1</sup> and *Luch* appears unnecessary and not very intelligible. It is natural that the controversial articles in separate issues of the newspaper on separate, sometimes very special questions do not give a complete idea of the objects and content of the struggle. Hence the legitimate dissatisfaction of the workers.

Yet the question of liquidationism, over which the struggle is now being waged, is at the present time one of the most important and most urgent questions of the labour movement. It is impossible to be a class conscious worker unless one studies the question in detail, unless one forms a definite opinion on it. A worker who wishes to decide independently the destinies of *his* party will not waive polemics even if they are not quite intelligible at first sight, but will earnestly seek and find the truth.

How is one to find the truth? How is one to make head or tail of the mutually contradictory opinions and assertions?

Every reasonable person understands that if a violent struggle takes place on any subject whatever, he must, in order to ascertain the truth, not confine himself to the statements made by the disputants, but must examine the *facts* and *documents* for himself, see whether there is any evidence of *witnesses* and whether that evidence is reliable.

This, of course, is not always easy to do. It is much "easier" to believe what you *happen* to hear, what is more "openly" shouted about, and so on. But people who are satisfied with this are called

<sup>1</sup> I.e., the Bolshevik *Pravda*, which commenced publication in St. Petersburg in May 1912.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

"superficial," light-minded people, and no one takes them seriously. It is impossible to get at the truth of any serious question unless one undertakes a certain amount of *independent* work, and whoever is afraid of work deprives himself of the possibility of finding the truth.

Therefore, we appeal only to those workers who are not afraid of this work, who have decided to find out things *independently* and to try to *discover facts, documents, evidence of witnesses*.

The first question that arises is—what is liquidationism? Where did this word come from, what does it mean?

*Luch* says that the liquidation of the Party, i.e., the dissolution, the break-up of the Party, the renunciation of the Party, is merely a wicked invention; the "factionalist" Bolsheviks invented this charge against the Mensheviks!

*Pravda* states that the whole Party has been condemning and fighting liquidationism for over four years.

Who is right? How is one to discover the truth?

Obviously, there is only one way of doing it: to seek for facts and documents in the *history* of the Party of the last four years, from 1908 to 1912, when the liquidators *finally seceded* from the Party.<sup>1</sup>

It is precisely these four years, when the present liquidators *were still* in the Party, that represent the most important period for the purpose of *tracing* the origin of the concept, liquidationism.

Hence, the first and basic conclusion: whoever talks of liquidationism, while *avoiding* the facts and documents of the Party during the period 1908-11, is hiding the truth from the workers.

What are these facts and documents of the Party?

First of all the *Party decision* adopted in December 1908.<sup>2</sup> If the workers do not wish to be treated like children who are stuffed with fairy tales and fiction, they must ask their advisers, leaders or representatives, whether a *Party decision* was adopted on the question of liquidationism in December 1908 and what that decision was.

<sup>1</sup> See the article "The Present Situation in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party" and the notes to it in the present volume.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> This refers to the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party which took place at that time. See the article "On to the High Road" in the present volume, pp. 3-12—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

That decision contains a *condemnation* of liquidationism and the explanation of what it is.

Liquidationism is "the attempts of a certain section of the Party intelligentsia to liquidate" (*i.e.*, to dissolve, destroy, abolish, close down) "the existing organisation of the . . . Party and substitute for it an amorphous association within the limits of legality" (*i.e.*, conformity with the laws, "open" existence) "at all costs, even if this legality is to be attained at the price of an *open renunciation of the programme, tactics and traditions*" (*i.e.*, the past experience) "of the Party."

Such was the *decision* of the Party on liquidationism, passed more than four years ago.

It is obvious from this decision what the essence of liquidationism is and why it is condemned. Its essence is the *renunciation* of the "underground," the abolition of the latter and its *replacement* by an amorphous association within the limits of legality at all costs. Therefore, it is not legal work, not the insistence on its necessity that the Party condemns. The Party condemns—and unreservedly condemns—the *substitution* for the old Party of something amorphous, something "open," which cannot be called a party.

The Party cannot exist unless it defends its existence, unless it unreservedly fights those who want to abolish and destroy it, who do not recognise it, who renounce it. This is obvious.

He who renounces the existing Party in the name of some new one must be told: try, build up a new party, but you cannot remain a member of the old, the present, the existing Party. Such is the meaning of the Party decision that was passed in December 1908, and it is obvious that no other decision could have been adopted on the question of the existence of the Party.

Of course, liquidationism is ideologically *connected* with *renegacy, with the renunciation of the programme and tactics, with opportunism*. This is exactly what is indicated in the concluding part of the above-quoted decision. But liquidationism is not *only* opportunism. The opportunists are leading the Party to a wrong, bourgeois path, the path of a liberal labour policy, but they *do not renounce* the Party itself, they do not dissolve it. Liquidationism is opportunism that goes to the length of renouncing the Party. It is self-evident that the Party cannot exist *if it includes* those who do

not recognise its existence. It is equally understandable that the renunciation of the "underground" under the existing conditions is the renunciation of the old Party.

The question is, what is the attitude of the liquidators towards the decision adopted by the Party in 1908?

This is the crux of the matter, this puts the sincerity and political honesty of the liquidators to the test.

Not one of them, unless he has taken leave of his senses, will deny the fact that such a decision was adopted by the Party and has not been repealed.

And so the liquidators resort to evasions; they either avoid the question and *withhold* from the workers the Party's decision of 1908, or exclaim (often with curses) that this decision was carried by the Bolsheviks.

But cursing only betrays the weakness of the liquidators. *Party decisions* have been carried by the Mensheviks, for example, the decision concerning municipalisation, which was passed in Stockholm in 1906. This is common knowledge. Many Bolsheviks do not agree with that decision. But not one of them denies that it is a *Party decision*. In exactly the same way the decision of 1908 concerning liquidationism is a *Party decision*. All subterfuges in regard to this question only signify a desire to mislead the workers.

Whoever wants to recognise the Party, not in words only, will not allow any subterfuges in this connection, and will insist on getting at the truth concerning the *decision of the Party* on the question of liquidationism. This decision has been endorsed since 1909 by *all the Party Mensheviks*, headed by Plekhanov who, in his *Dnevnik* and in a whole series of other Marxian publications, explained on many occasions and quite definitely that he who wants to liquidate the Party cannot be in the Party.

Plekhanov has been and will remain a Menshevik. Therefore the usual allusions of the liquidators to the "Bolshevik" nature of the decisions of the Party in 1908 are doubly wrong.

The more abuse the liquidators hurl at Plekhanov in *Luch* and *Nasha Zarya*, the clearer is the proof that the liquidators are in the wrong and that they are trying to obscure the truth by noise, shout-

ing and brawling. Sometimes a novice is stunned by such methods, but the workers will find their bearings for all that, and will soon brush aside the curses.

Is the unity of the workers necessary? It is.

Is the unity of the workers possible without the unity of the workers' organisation? Obviously not.

What prevents the unity of the workers' party? Disputes over liquidationism.

Therefore, the workers must understand what these disputes are about in order that they *themselves* may decide the destiny of their Party and *save it*.

The first step in this direction is to read the *first* decision of the Party on liquidationism. The workers must know this decision thoroughly and study it carefully, brushing aside all attempts to evade the question or to sidetrack it. Having studied this decision, every worker will begin to understand the essence of the question of liquidationism, why this question is so important and so "acute," why this question has been facing the Party during the four years and more of the period of reaction.

In the next article we shall consider another important decision of the Party on liquidationism which was adopted about three and a half years ago, and then pass on to facts and documents which define how the question stands at present.

## II. THE DECISION OF 1910

In our first article (*Pravda*, No. 289) we quoted the first and basic document with which those workers who wish to discover the truth in the present disputes must make themselves familiar, namely, the Party decision of December 1908 on the question of liquidationism.

Now we shall quote and examine another, no less important decision of the Party on the same question that was passed three and a half years ago, in January 1910.<sup>1</sup> This decision is especially im-

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the decisions of the plenum of the Central Committee in 1910 in respect of which the second chapter of the article, "Notes of a Publicist," was written: "The 'Unity Crisis' in Our Party." See present volume, pp. 37-70 — *Ed. Eng. ed.*

portant because it was carried *unanimously*: all the Bolsheviks, without exception, all the so-called *Vperyod*-ists, and finally (this is most important of all) *all* the Mensheviks and the present liquidators without exception, and also all the "national" (i.e., Jewish, Polish and Lettish) Marxists endorsed this decision.

We quote here in full the most important passage in this decision:

"The historical situation of the Social-Democratic movement in the period of the bourgeois counter-revolution inevitably gives rise, as a manifestation of the bourgeois influence over the proletariat, on the one hand, to the renunciation of the illegal Social-Democratic Party, the debasement of its role and importance, the attempts to curtail the programme and tactical tasks and slogans of consistent Social-Democracy, etc.; on the other hand, it gives rise to the renunciation of the Duma work of Social-Democracy and of the utilisation of the legal possibilities, the failure to understand the importance of either, the inability to adapt consistent Social-Democratic tactics to the peculiar historical conditions of the present moment, etc.

"An integral part of the Social-Democratic tactics under such conditions is the overcoming of both deviations by broadening and deepening the Social-Democratic work in all spheres of the class struggle of the proletariat and by explaining the danger of such deviations."

This decision clearly shows that three and a half years ago all the Marxists, as represented by all the tendencies without exception, had *unanimously* to recognise two *deviations* from the Marxian tactics. Both deviations were recognised as *dangerous*. Both deviations were explained as being due, not to accident, not to the evil intention of individual persons but to the "*historical situation*" of the labour movement in the given period.

Moreover, this unanimous decision of the Party points to the *class* origin and significance of these deviations. For Marxists do not confine themselves merely to bare references to ruin and disintegration. That disintegration, lack of faith, despondency, perplexity reign in the minds of many adherents of democracy and socialism is obvious to all. It is not enough to admit this. It is necessary to understand the *class* origin of the discord and disruption, to understand what *class* interests of the non-proletarian environment foster this "confusion" among the friends of the proletariat.

And the decision of the Party adopted three and a half years

ago gave an answer to this important question: *the deviations from Marxism are generated by the "bourgeois counter-revolution," they are generated by the "bourgeois influence over the proletariat."*

What are these deviations that threaten to deliver the proletariat to the influence of the bourgeoisie? One of these deviations, which is connected with *Vperyod*-ism and which renounced the Duma work of the Social-Democrats as well as the utilisation of the legal possibilities, *has disappeared almost completely*. None of the Social-Democrats in Russia now preach these erroneous non-Marxian views. The *Vperyod*-ists (including Alexinsky and others) have begun to work in *Pravda* alongside the Party Mensheviks.

The other deviation indicated in the decision of the Party is precisely *liquidationism*. This is obvious from the reference to the "renunciation" of the "underground" and to the "debasement" of its role and importance. Finally, we have a very precise document, published *three years ago* and refuted by no one, a document emanating from *all* the "national" Marxists and from Trotsky (better witnesses than whom the liquidators could not produce); this document states directly that "in essence it would be desirable to call the tendency indicated in the resolution *liquidationism*, *which it is necessary to combat*. . . ."

Thus, the fundamental, the most important fact that everyone who wants to understand what the present controversy is about must know, is that: three and a half years ago the Party *unanimously* recognised *liquidationism* to be a "dangerous" deviation from Marxism, a deviation which it is necessary to combat, which expresses the "*bourgeois influence over the proletariat*."

The interests of the bourgeoisie, which is biased against democracy and which is, generally speaking, counter-revolutionary, demand the *dissolution* of the old party of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie is doing everything to disseminate and support all ideas directed towards the *liquidation* of the party of the working class. The bourgeoisie is striving to sow the seeds of renunciation of the old tasks, in order to "curtail" them, to cut and lop them

off, to emasculate them, to substitute conciliation or an agreement with the Purishkeviches and Co. for the determined destruction of the foundations of their power.

Liquidationism is, in fact, the introduction of these bourgeois ideas of renunciation and renegacy among the proletariat.

Such is the *class* significance of liquidationism as indicated in the unanimous decision of the Party three and a half years ago. It is in this that the entire Party sees the greatest harmfulness and danger of liquidationism, its pernicious effect on the labour movement, on the consolidation of an independent (in deeds and not in words) party of the working class.

Liquidationism is not only the "liquidation" (*i.e.*, the dissolution, the destruction) of the old party of the working class, it also means the destruction of the *class independence* of the proletariat, the corruption of its class consciousness by *bourgeois* ideas.

We shall give an illustration of this appraisal of liquidationism in the next article, which will set forth in full the most important arguments of the liquidationist *Luch*. And now let us sum up briefly what we have stated above. The attempts of the *Luch*-ists in general, and of Messrs. Dan and Potresov in particular, to argue that "liquidationism" is an invention are subterfuges remarkable for their falsity, subterfuges based on the assumption that the readers of *Luch* are completely uninformed. Actually, apart from the Party decision of 1908, there is a *unanimous* Party decision of 1910, which gives a complete appraisal of liquidationism as a bourgeois deviation from the proletarian path, a deviation that is harmful and dangerous to the working class. Only the enemies of the working class can hide or evade this Party appraisal.

### III. THE ATTITUDE OF THE LIQUIDATORS TO THE DECISIONS OF 1908 AND 1910

In the preceding article (*Pravda*, No. 95 [299]), we quoted the exact words of the unanimous Party decision on liquidationism, which define the latter as a manifestation of bourgeois influence over the proletariat.

As we have pointed out, this decision was adopted in *January*



1910. Let us now examine the behaviour of those liquidators who brazenly assure us that there is not and never was such a thing as liquidationism.

In February 1910, in No. 2 of the magazine *Nasha Zarya*, which had just made its appearance, Mr. Potresov wrote bluntly that "a party representing a complete and organised hierarchy" (i.e., ladder or system) "of institutions *does not exist*" and that it is impossible to liquidate "*what in reality no longer exists* as an organised body." (See *Nasha Zarya*, 1910, No. 2, p. 61.)

This was stated a month or even less *after* the unanimous decision of the Party!!

And in March 1910, another liquidationist magazine, namely *Vozrozhdeniye*, having the same set of contributors, Potresov, Dan, Martynov, Yezhov, Martov, Levitsky and Co., stressed and popularly explained Mr. Potresov's words:

"There is nothing to wind up and—we on our part" (i.e., the editors of *Vozrozhdeniye*) "would add—the dream of re-establishing this hierarchy in its old, underground form is simply a harmful reactionary utopia which indicates the loss of political intuition by the representatives of a party which at one time was the most realistic of all." (*Vozrozhdeniye*, 1910, No. 5, p. 51.)

No party exists, and the idea of restoring it is a harmful utopia—these are clear and definite words. Here we have a plain and direct renunciation of the Party. The renunciation (and the invitation to the workers to do likewise) came from people who abandoned the underground and "dreamed" of an open party.

This exit from the underground was, moreover, quite definitely and openly supported by P. B. Axelrod in 1912, both in *Nevsky Golos* (1912, No. 6) and in *Nasha Zarya* (1912, No. 6).

"Talking in these circumstances about non-factionalism," P. B. Axelrod wrote, "means behaving like an ostrich . . . it means deceiving oneself and others. Factional organisation and consolidation constitute the prime duty and the most urgent task of the partisans of Party reform, or to be more exact, of revolution."

Thus P. B. Axelrod is openly in favour of a *Party revolution*, i.e., the destruction of the old Party and the formation of a new one.

In 1913, *Luch*, No. 101, in an unsigned editorial stated plainly that "among the workers in some places there is even a revival and strengthening of sympathy for illegal work" and that this is "a regrettable fact." L. Sedov, the author of that article, admitted that the article "caused dissatisfaction" even among the partisans of the tactics of *Luch*. (*Nasha Zarya*, 1913, No. 3, p. 49.) L. Sedov's explanations in this connection were such as to cause renewed dissatisfaction; this time it was one of the partisans of *Luch*, namely, An,<sup>1</sup> who in *Luch*, No. 181, wrote opposing Sedov. An protests against Sedov's assumption that "illegality is an obstacle to the political organisation of our movement, to the building up of a workers' Social-Democratic Party." An ridicules L. Sedov, who leaves one "in the dark" as to whether illegality is desirable or not.

The editors of *Luch* published a long postscript to An's article in which they found An "to be in the wrong in his criticism of L. Sedov," and declared themselves *in favour of Sedov*.

In *Zhivaya Zhizn*, No. 8 (August 1 [July 19], 1913), V. Zasulich wrote: "It is difficult to say whether the organisation" (i.e., the Social-Democratic Party) "helped or hampered . . . the work." It is obvious that these words are tantamount to a renunciation of the Party. V. Zasulich justifies the flight from the Party by stating that the organisations were becoming deserted "because there was nothing to do in them at the time." V. Zasulich is creating a purely anarchist theory of a "broad stratum" instead of a party. (See the detailed examination of that theory in *Prosveshcheniye*, No. 9, 1913.)

What is the fundamental and principal conclusion to be drawn from the documents we have quoted above?

The entire Party, both in 1908 and in 1910, condemned and rejected liquidationism, and clearly and in detail explained the class origin and the danger of this tendency. *All* the liquidationist newspapers and magazines—*Vozrozhdeniye* (1909-10), *Nasha Zarya* (1910-13), *Nevsky Golos* (1912), *Luch* (1912-13) and

<sup>1</sup> An—Noah Jordania, one of the leaders of the Georgian Mensheviks.—Ed

*Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta* (1913-14)<sup>1</sup>—all, after the most definite and even unanimous decisions have been adopted by the Party, reiterate thoughts and arguments that contain *obvious* liquidationism.

Even the partisans of *Luch* are forced to declare that they disagree with these arguments, with this preaching. This is a fact. Therefore, to shout about the "baiting" of liquidators, as Trotsky, Semkovsky and many other patronisers of liquidationism do, is downright dishonesty, for it is a crying distortion of the truth.

The truth proved by the documents I have quoted, which cover a period of more than five years (1908-13), is that the liquidators, mocking all the Party decisions, continue to abuse and bait the Party, *i.e.*, "illegal work."

Every worker who wants seriously to examine the controversial and vexed questions *himself*, who wants to decide these questions for *himself*, must first of all master this truth and take independent measures to investigate and verify the above-quoted decisions of the Party and the arguments of the liquidators. Only those who carefully study, ponder over and independently solve the problems and *destiny* of their Party deserve to be called Party members and builders of the workers' party. It is impossible to treat with indifference the question of whether it is the Party that is "guilty" of "baiting" (*i.e.*, of too trenchant and mistaken attacks on) the liquidators or whether it is the liquidators who are guilty of *directly violating* Party decisions, of *persistently advocating the liquidation, i.e., the destruction*, of the Party.

It is obvious that the Party cannot exist unless it fights the destroyers of the Party with all its might.

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, 1914, No. 1, the New Year editorial: "The path to an open political party of action is at the same time the path to Party unity" (to the unity of the builders of the open Party?). Or No. 5, 1914: "The overcoming of all those obstacles" (which stand in the way of the organisation of labour congresses) "is nothing but a most genuine struggle for the freedom of coalition, *i.e.*, for the legality of the labour movement, and is closely connected with the struggle for the open existence of the Social-Democratic Labour Party." [Author's note to this article, reproduced in the volume *Marxism and Liquidationism*, in 1914—Ed. Eng. ed.]

Having cited the documents on this fundamental question, we shall, in the next article, pass on to the appraisal of the *ideological* content of the preaching of an "open Party."

#### IV. THE CLASS MEANING OF LIQUIDATIONISM

In the preceding articles (*Pravda*, Nos. 289, 299 and 314) we have shown that all the Marxists, both in 1908 and in 1910, irrevocably condemned liquidationism as the renunciation of the past. The Marxists explained to the working class that liquidation is the instilling of bourgeois influence into the proletariat. And *all* the liquidationist publications, from 1909 up to 1913, flagrantly violated and are still violating the decisions of the Marxists.

Let us consider the slogan, an "open labour party," or "a struggle for an open party," which is still being advocated by the liquidators in *Luch* and *Nasha Zarya*.

Is this slogan Marxian, proletarian, or liberal, bourgeois?

The answer to this question must be sought not in the moods or the plans of the liquidators or of other groups, but in the analysis of the interrelation of the social forces of Russia in the present period. The meaning of slogans is determined not by the intentions of their authors, but by the correlation of forces of *all* the classes in the country.

The feudal landowners and their "bureaucracy" are hostile to all changes in the direction of political liberty. This is understandable. The bourgeoisie, because of its economic position in a backward and semi-feudal country, *cannot but* strive for freedom. But the bourgeoisie fears the activity of the people *more* than it fears reaction. The year 1905 demonstrated this truth with particular clarity; this truth was thoroughly understood by the working class; it was only the opportunist and semi-liberal intellectuals who failed to understand it.

The bourgeoisie is both liberal and counter-revolutionary. Hence its impotent and miserable reformism which borders on the ridiculous. Dreams of reforms—and fear of settling accounts in real earnest with the feudal landowners, who not only refuse to grant reforms, but even take back those they have already granted.

Preaching reforms—and fear of a popular movement. Striving to oust the feudal landowners—and fear of losing *their* support, fear of losing *their own* privileges. Upon this interrelation of classes is built up the system of June 16 [3], which gives full power to the feudal landowners and privileges to the bourgeoisie.

The class position of the proletariat makes it altogether impossible for it to “share” the privileges or to *be afraid* of anyone losing them. That is why selfishly narrow, miserable and dull-witted reformism is altogether alien to the proletariat. As to the peasant masses—they are, on the one hand, immeasurably oppressed, and instead of enjoying privileges they suffer from starvation; on the other hand, they are undoubtedly petty-bourgeois—hence, they inevitably vacillate between the liberals and the workers.

Such is the objective situation.

From this situation it obviously follows that the slogan of an open labour party is, by its class origin, a slogan of the counter-revolutionary liberals. It contains nothing save reformism; it does not contain even a hint that the proletariat, the only class that is thoroughly democratic, is conscious of its task of fighting the liberals for influence over the whole of democracy; there is not even a suggestion of destroying the very foundation of all the privileges of the feudal landowners, the bureaucracy, etc., not a thought of the general foundations of political liberty and democratic constitution; instead, this slogan implies the tacit renunciation of the old, and consequently it implies renegacy and the dissolution (liquidation) of the workers' party.

In brief: this slogan carries into the midst of the workers in a period of counter-revolution the *preaching of the very thing* the liberal bourgeoisie is practising in its own midst. Therefore, had there been no liquidators, the clever bourgeois progressives would have had to find, or hire, intellectuals in order to preach this to the working class!

Only brainless people can compare the *words* of the liquidators with their *motives*. It is necessary to compare their *words* with the *deeds* and the objective position of the liberal bourgeoisie.

Look at these *deeds*. In 1902, the bourgeoisie was *in favour* of illegality. Struve was commissioned by it to edit the underground *Osvobozhdeniye*. When the labour movement led to October 30 [17], the liberals and the Cadets abandoned illegality, then repudiated it, and declared it to be unnecessary, mad, sinful and godless.<sup>1</sup> *Instead* of the underground, the liberal bourgeoisie advocated a *struggle for an open party*. This is a historical fact, confirmed by the incessant attempts at legalisation made by the Cadets (1905-07) and the Progressives (1913).

Among the Cadets we see "open work and its secret organisation"; the kind-hearted, *i.e.*, unconscious, liquidator, A. Vlasov, has only paraphrased the deeds of the Cadets "in his own words."

Why did the liberals renounce illegality and adopt the slogan of "a struggle for an open party"? Is it because Struve is a traitor? No, just the opposite. Struve went over to the other side because the entire bourgeoisie turned. And the latter turned: 1) because it obtained privileges on December 24 [11], 1905,<sup>2</sup> and even on June 16 [3], 1907,<sup>3</sup> it was placed in the position of a *tolerated* opposition; 2) because it itself was mortally frightened by the popular movement. The slogan of "a struggle for an open party," when translated from the language of "high politics" into plain and intelligible language, means the following:

"Messieurs Landlords! Don't imagine that we want to push you off the earth. No, just move up a little and make room for us bourgeois" (an open party)—"we shall then defend you five times more 'cleverly,' cunningly and more 'scientifically' than the Timoshkins and Sabler's priests."

In imitation of the Cadets, the slogan of "a struggle for an open party" was taken up by the petty bourgeoisie, the Narodniki. In August 1906, Messrs. Peshekhonov and Co. of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* renounced illegality, proclaimed the "struggle for an open

<sup>1</sup> There is a "remarkable book," *Vekhi*, which has appeared in numerous editions. It contains an excellent summary of these ideas of counter-revolutionary liberalism.

<sup>2</sup> The date of the promulgation of the law convening the First Duma.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>3</sup> The date of Stolypin's *coup d'état* and the arrest of the Social-Democratic members of the Duma.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

party," and cut out from their programme the consistently democratic "underground" slogans.

As a result of these philistines' reformist chatter about a "broad and open party" they, as is obvious to all, were left *without any* party at all, *without any* contact with the masses, and the Cadets have even left off dreaming of having such contacts.

Only in this way, only by analysing the position of the classes, by analysing the general history of the counter-revolution, is it possible to *understand* what liquidationism is. The liquidators are petty-bourgeois intellectuals, sent by the bourgeoisie to sow the seeds of liberal corruption among the workers. The liquidators are traitors to Marxism and traitors to democracy. The slogan of "a struggle for an open party" in their case (as well as in the case of the liberals and the Narodniki) only serves to camouflage their renunciation of the past and their *rupture with the working class*. This is a fact that has been proved both by the elections in the workers' electoral colleges for the Fourth Duma and by the history of the origin of *Pravda*, the workers' paper. It was obvious to all that it was those who had not renounced the past and knew how to make use of "open work" and of all and sundry "possibilities" exclusively in the spirit of *that* past, and for the sake of strengthening, consolidating and developing it, who had contacts with the masses.

During the period of the Third-of-June regime it could not be otherwise.

In our next article we shall speak about the "curtailment" of the programme and tactics by the liquidators (*i.e.*, liberals).

## V. THE SLOGAN OF STRUGGLE FOR AN OPEN PARTY

In the preceding article, *Pravda*, No. 123, we examined the objective meaning, *i.e.*, the meaning that is determined by the interrelation of classes, of the slogan "an open party" or "a struggle for an open party." This slogan is a slavish repetition of the tactics of the bourgeoisie, for it correctly expresses its renunciation of the revolution or its counter-revolutionary character.

Let us consider some of the attempts the liquidators most fre-

quently make to defend the slogan of "a struggle for an open party." Mayevsky, Sedov, Dan and all the *Luch*-ists try to confuse the open *Party* with open work or *activity*. Such confusion is downright sophistry, a trick, deception of the reader.

In the first place, the open activity of the Social-Democrats during the period 1904-13 is a *fact*. Open party is a *phrase* of the intellectuals, which covers up the renunciation of the Party. Secondly, the Party has repeatedly condemned liquidationism, *i.e.*, the slogan of an open party. But the Party, far from condemning open activities, has, on the contrary, repeatedly condemned those who neglected them or renounced them. In the third place, from 1904 to 1907, open activities were *especially* developed among *all* the Social-Democrats. But *not a single* tendency, *not a single* faction of Social-Democracy then advanced the slogan "struggle for an open party."

This is a historical fact. It should be pondered over by those who wish to *understand* liquidationism.

Did the absence of the slogan "struggle for an open party" hamper open activities in 1904-07? Not in the least.

Why did no such slogan arise among the Social-Democrats *at that time*? Precisely because at that time there was no raging counter-revolution to draw a section of the Social-Democrats into extreme opportunism. It was only *too clear* at the time that the slogan "struggle for an open party" was an opportunist phrase, a renunciation of "illegality."

Gentlemen, try to grasp the meaning of this historical turn: during the period 1905, when there was a splendid development of open activities, there was *no* slogan of "struggle for an open party"; during the period of counter-revolution, when there is a weaker development of open activities, the slogans of renunciation of "illegality" and "struggle for an open party" crop up among a section of the Social-Democrats (who follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie).

Is not the meaning and the class significance of such a turn clear yet?

Finally, the fourth and most important circumstance. Two kinds



of open activity, in two diametrically opposite directions, are possible (and may be observed): one in defence of the old, and entirely in the *spirit* of the old, *in the name* of the slogans and the tactics of the old; and another, *against* the old, in the name of renunciation of the old, the belittling of the role and slogans of the old, etc.

The existence of these two kinds of open activity, hostile and irreconcilable in principle, in the period from 1906 (the Cadets and Messrs. Peshekhonov and Co.) to 1913 (*Luch*, *Nasha Zarya*), is a most indisputable historical fact. Is it possible to restrain a smile when one hears a simpleton (or one who for a while plays the simpleton) say: what is there to quarrel about if both the one and the other carry on open activities? The dispute, my dear sir, is precisely about whether these activities should be carried on in defence of "illegality" and its spirit, or in order to degrade it, against it and not in its spirit! The dispute is only—just "*only*"!—about whether the given open work is being conducted in the liberal or in the consistently democratic spirit. The dispute is "*only*" about whether it is possible to *confine* oneself to open work: remember Mr. Liberal Struve who did not confine himself to it in 1902, but wholly "*confined himself*" to it in the years 1906-13.

Our liquidators of *Luch* cannot possibly comprehend that the slogan "struggle for an open party" means carrying into the midst of the workers liberal (Struveist) ideas, tricked out in the rags of "near-Marxian" catchwords.

Or take, for instance, the arguments of the editors of *Luch* themselves, in their reply to An (No. 181):

"The Social-Democratic Party is not limited to those few comrades whom the realities of life force to work underground. Truly, if the entire *Party* were limited to illegality, how many members would it have? Two to three hundred? And where would those thousands if not tens of thousands of workers be, who are actually bearing the brunt of the entire Social-Democratic work?"

For a thinking person this argument alone suffices to identify its authors as liberals. First, they are telling a deliberate untruth about the "underground." It numbers more than "hundreds."

Secondly, all over the world the number of Party members, as compared with the number of workers carrying on Social-Democratic work, is "limited." For example, in Germany there are only one million members in the Social-Democratic Party, yet the number of votes cast for the Social-Democrats is about five million, and the proletariat numbers about fifteen million. The proportion of the number of Party members to the number of Social-Democrats is determined in the various countries by the differences in their historical conditions. In the third place, we have nothing that could replace our "underground." Thus, in *opposing* the Party, *Luch* refers to the *non-Party* workers, or those who are *outside the Party*. This is the usual method of the liberal who tries to cut off the masses from their *class conscious* vanguard. *Luch* does not understand the relation between Party and *class*, just as the "Economists" in 1895-1901 failed to understand it. In the fourth place, our "Social-Democratic work" is real Social-Democratic work only in so far as it is conducted *in the spirit* of the old, under its slogans.

The arguments of *Luch* are the arguments of liberal intellectuals, who, unwilling to join the actually existing Party organisation, try to *destroy* that organisation by inciting against it the non-Party, scattered mass, whose class consciousness is little developed. The German liberals do the same, alleging that the Social-Democrats do not represent the proletariat since their "Party" comprises "only" one-fifteenth of the proletariat!

Take the even more common argument advanced by *Luch*: "We" are for an open party, "just as in Europe." The liberals and the liquidators want a constitution and an open party, "as in Europe" *today*, but they do not want the path by which Europe reached that today.

Kossovsky, a liquidator and Bundist, teaches us in *Luch* to follow the example of the Austrians. But he forgets that the Austrians have had a constitution *since 1867*, and that they could not have had it without: 1) the movement of 1848; 2) the profound political crisis of 1859-66, when the *weakness* of the working class allowed Bismarck and Co. to *extricate* themselves by means of the

famous "revolution from above." What then is the outcome of the discourses of Kossovsky, Dan, Larin and all the *Luch*-ists?

The only outcome is that they help to solve our crisis in the spirit of "revolution" necessarily "from above"! But such work is *precisely* the "work" of Stolypin's Labour Party.

No matter where we look—we see the liquidators renouncing both Marxism and democracy.

In the next article we shall examine in detail their arguments concerning the necessity of curtailing our Social-Democratic slogans.

## VI

We must now consider the curtailment of Marxian slogans by the liquidators. For this purpose it would be best to take the decisions of their August conference, but for obvious reasons it is possible to analyse these decisions only in the press published abroad. Here we are obliged to quote *Luch*, which, in the article by L. S. (No. 108-194), gave a remarkably precise exposition of the whole essence, the whole spirit of liquidationism.

Mr. L. S. writes as follows:

"The deputy Muranov so far recognises only three partial demands, which, as is known, were the three pillars of the electoral platform of the Leninists: the complete democratisation of the state system, an eight-hour day and the transfer of the land to the peasants. *Pravda*, too, continues to maintain this point of view. Yet we, as well as the whole of European Social-Democracy" (read—"we, and also Milyukov, who assures us that, thank God, we have a constitution"), "see in the advancing of partial demands a method of agitation which may be crowned with success only if it reckons with the everyday struggle of the working masses. We think that only that which, on the one hand, is of fundamental importance for the further development of the labour movement, and, on the other hand, may acquire urgency for the masses, should be advanced as the partial demand upon which, at the given moment, the Social-Democrats should concentrate their attention. Of the three demands advanced by *Pravda*, only one—the eight-hour day—plays and can play a part in the everyday struggle of the workers. The other two demands may at the present moment serve as subjects for propaganda, but not for agitation. Concerning the difference between propaganda and agitation, see the brilliant pages of G. V. Plekhanov's pamphlet, *The Struggle Against Famine*." (L. S. has got into the wrong

box; it is "painful" for him to recall Plekhanov's controversy in 1899-1902 with the "Economists" whom L. S. is copying!)

"Apart from the eight-hour day, the demand for the right of association, the right to form any kind of organisation, with the corresponding right of assembly and speech, both oral and printed, is a partial demand advanced both by the requirements of the labour movement and by the entire course of Russian life."

Here we have the tactics of the liquidators. What L. S. describes by the words "complete democratisation, etc.," and what he calls the "transfer of the land to the peasants" are *not*, you see, of "urgency for the masses," they are not advanced "by the requirements of the labour movement" and "the entire course of Russian life." How old are these arguments and how familiar are they to those who remember the *history* of Russian Marxian practice, its many years of struggle against the "Economists," who renounced the tasks of democracy! With what talent *Luch* copies the views of Prokopovich and Kuskova, who *in those days* tried to entice the workers on to the liberal path!

However, let us examine the arguments of *Luch* more closely. From the point of view of common sense these arguments are sheer madness. Is it really possible to assert, without having taken leave of one's senses, that the above-mentioned "peasant" demand (*i.e.*, one that is to benefit the peasants) is *not* of "urgency for the masses"? is *not* "advanced both by the requirements of the labour movement and by the entire course of Russian life"? This is not only an untruth, it is a howling absurdity. The entire history of Russia in the nineteenth century, the entire "course of Russian life" has advanced that question, has *made* it urgent, nay, most urgent. This has been reflected in the *whole* of the legislation of Russia. How could *Luch* arrive at such a monstrous untruth?

It had to arrive at it, because *Luch* is in bondage to *liberal* policy and the liberals are true to themselves when they reject (or, like *Luch*, *put off*) the peasants' demand. The liberal bourgeoisie does so, because its *class* position forces it to humour the landlords and to oppose the people's movement.

*Luch* brings to the workers the ideas of the liberal landlords and is guilty of treachery to the democratic peasantry.

Furthermore, can it be that only the right of association is of "urgency"? What about the inviolability of person? or the abolition of despotism and tyranny? or universal, etc., suffrage? or a single Chamber, etc.? Every literate worker, everyone who bears in mind the recent past, knows extremely well that all this is urgent. In thousands of articles and speeches all the liberals acknowledge that all this is urgent. Why then did *Luch* declare only one of these, albeit the most important of liberties, to be urgent, while the fundamental conditions of political liberty, of democracy and of a constitutional regime were struck out, put off, relegated to the archives of "propaganda," and excluded from agitation?

The reason, and the only reason, is that *Luch* does not accept what is *unacceptable to the liberals*.

From the standpoint of urgency for the masses, of the requirements of the labour movement and of the course of Russian life, there is *no* difference between the three demands of Muranov and of *Pravda* (or, to put it briefly, the demands of consistent Marxists). The demands of the workers and the demands of the peasants and the general political demands are all of equal urgency for the masses, they are all *equally* advanced to the forefront both by the requirements of the labour movement and "the entire course of Russian life." All three demands are also alike from the standpoint of the "partialness" dear to our worshipper of moderation and accuracy: they are "partial" in relation to the final aims, but they are very high in relation, for example, to "Europe" in general.

Why then does *Luch* accept the eight-hour day and reject the rest? Why did it decide *for* the workers that the eight-hour day does "play a part" in their everyday struggle whereas the general political and peasant demands do *not* play such a part? Facts show, on the one hand, that the workers in their daily struggle advance general political as well as peasant demands—and, on the other hand, that they often *fight* for more moderate reductions of the working day.

What is the trouble, then?

The trouble lies in the reformism of *Luch*, which, as usual,

attributes its own liberal narrow-mindedness to the "masses," to the "course of history," etc.

Reformism, in general, means that people confine themselves to agitation for changes which do not require the removal of the main foundations of the old ruling class, changes that are *compatible* with the *preservation* of these foundations. The eight-hour day is compatible with the preservation of the power of capital. The Russian liberals, in order to attract the workers, are themselves prepared to endorse ("as far as possible") this demand. On the other hand, those demands for which *Luch* does not want to "agitate" are *incompatible* with the preservation of the foundations of the pre-capitalist period, the period of serfdom.

*Luch* eliminates from the agitation precisely that which is not acceptable to the liberals, who do not want to abolish the power of the landlords, but want only to share their power and privileges. *Luch* eliminates precisely that which is incompatible with the point of view of reformism.

That's the whole point!

Neither Muranov, nor *Pravda*, nor any Marxist rejects partial demands. That is nonsense. Take insurance, for example. We reject the *deception* of the people by idle talk about partial demands by means of *reformism*. We reject as utopian, self-seeking and false the *liberal reformism* in present-day Russia, the reformism based on constitutional illusions and full of the spirit of servility to the landlord. That is *the* point which *Luch* tries to confuse and hide by phrases about "partial demands" in general, although it itself admits that neither Muranov nor *Pravda* rejects certain "partial demands."

*Luch* curtails the Marxian slogans, tries to fit them into the narrow, reformist, liberal measure, and thus carries bourgeois ideas into the ranks of the workers.

The struggle the Marxists waged against the liquidators is nothing but an expression of the struggle of the progressive workers against the liberal bourgeois for influence over the masses of the people, for their political enlightenment and education.







## EXCERPTS FROM THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE PRAGUE CONFERENCE OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL- DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

### THE PRESENT SITUATION AND THE TASKS OF THE PARTY

THE conference first of all confirms the resolution on the Third-of-June regime and the tasks of the Party that was passed by the Party Conference of December 1908.<sup>1</sup> The conference points out the particularly great importance of that resolution, whose theses on the historic importance and the class essence of the entire Third-of-June regime, on the one hand, and on the maturing of the revolutionary crisis, on the other, are fully borne out by the events of the past three years.

Of these events the conference notes the following in particular:

a) The tsarist agrarian policy—with which the government parties of the landlords, the big bourgeoisie, and, in fact, counter-revolutionary liberalism also, have bound up their counter-revolutionary interests—has not only failed to lead to the establishment of anything like stable bourgeois relations in the rural districts, but has not relieved the peasants of mass starvation, which reveals an extreme change for the worse in the conditions of the population and an enormous waste of the productive forces of the country.

b) While remaining impotent against the competition of the modern capitalist states in the world market and pressed more and more into the background in Europe, tsarism, in alliance with the Black Hundred nobility and the growing industrial bourgeoisie, is now attempting to satisfy its predatory interests by means of a crude “nationalist” policy directed against the borderlands, against all the oppressed nationalities, against the more cultured

<sup>1</sup> See present volume, pp. 13-16.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

regions (Finland, Poland, the Northwestern Region) in particular, and also by means of colonial conquest directed against the peoples of Asia (Persia, China) who are waging a revolutionary struggle for liberation.

c) The economic boom is to an enormous extent nullified by the state of complete disorganisation in the economic conditions of the peasantry, by the rapacious budget policy of the autocracy and by the corruption of the bureaucratic machine, while, on the other hand, the increasing cost of living intensifies the misery of the working class and of the broad masses of the population.

d) In view of this, during the five years the Third Duma has existed, the broad masses of the population have become more and more convinced of the unwillingness, inability and impotence of the Duma to do anything to improve the conditions of the broad masses of the people, and have become more and more convinced of the anti-popular character of the parties predominating in that Duma.

e) The beginning of a political revival is to be observed among wide circles of democracy and above all among the proletariat. The workers' strikes in 1910-11, the beginning of demonstrations and proletarian meetings, the beginning of a movement among the urban bourgeois democracy (the student strikes), etc.—all these are manifestations of the growing revolutionary spirit among the masses against the June 16 [3] regime.

Basing itself on all these data, the conference confirms the tasks confronting the Party that were enumerated in detail in the resolution of the conference of December 1908, and points out especially that the task of the capture of power by the proletariat, which leads the peasantry, remains, as heretofore, the task of the democratic revolution in Russia. The conference especially draws the attention of comrades to the fact that:

- 1) Prolonged work of socialist training, organisation and consolidation of the advanced masses of the proletariat is, as heretofore, first and foremost on the order of the day;

- 2) Intensified work must be carried on to restore the underground organisation of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, which, more extensively than heretofore, takes advantage of

all legal possibilities, which is capable of leading the economic struggle of the proletariat, and is the only party capable of leading its ever increasing political activities;

3) It is necessary to organise and expand systematic political agitation, to give all possible support to the incipient mass movement and to secure its expansion under the banner of the full, uncurtailed slogans of the Party. The republican propaganda against the policy of the tsarist monarchy must be specially pushed forward also to counterbalance the widespread propaganda for curtailing the slogans and for confining the work to the limits of existing "legality."

### LIQUIDATIONISM AND THE GROUP OF LIQUIDATORS

Taking into consideration:

1) That for about four years the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party has been waging a determined struggle against the liquidationist tendency, which at the Party Conference of December 1908 was defined as

"... the attempts of a certain section of the Party intelligentsia to liquidate the existing organisation of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and substitute for it an amorphous association within the limits of legality at all costs, even if this legality is to be attained at the price of an open renunciation of the programme, tactics and traditions of the Party";

2) That the plenum of the Central Committee in January 1910, in continuing its struggle against this tendency, unanimously recognised it as a manifestation of the influence of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat and stipulated for a complete rupture with liquidationism and the final overcoming of this bourgeois deviation from socialism as a condition of real Party unity and fusion of the former factions of the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks;

3) That in spite of all the decisions of the Party and in spite of the obligation undertaken by the representatives of all the factions at the plenum in January 1910, the section of the Social-Democrats grouped around the magazines *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni* openly took up the defence of the tendency which was recognised by the entire Party to be the product of bourgeois influence over the proletariat;

4) That the ex-members of the Central Committee, Mikhail, Yury and Roman not only refused to join the Central Committee in the spring of 1910, but declined even to attend one meeting for the purpose of co-opting new members, and openly declared that they considered the very existence of the Central Committee of the Party to be "harmful";

5) That since that very plenum of 1910 the above-mentioned principal publications of the liquidators, *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni*, have turned decidedly and along the whole line towards liquidationism, not only "belittling" (in spite of the decisions of the plenum) "the importance of the illegal Party," but directly renouncing the Party, calling it a "corpse," declaring the Party to be already dissolved, describing the restoration of an illegal Party as a "reactionary utopia," heaping calumny and abuse on the illegal Party in the pages of the legal magazines, calling upon the workers to consider the Party nuclei and the Party hierarchy to be "atrophied," etc.;

6) That while all over Russia, Party men, irrespective of faction, have united for the urgent task of convening a Party conference, the liquidators, having segregated themselves into quite independent grouplets, have split off even in those localities where Party Mensheviks predominate (Ekaterinoslav, Kiev), and have definitely refused to maintain any Party contacts with the local organisations of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party;

The conference declares that the group represented by *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni* has, by its behaviour, definitely *placed itself outside the Party*.

The conference calls upon all Party men, irrespective of tendency and shade of opinion, to wage a fight against liquidationism, to explain its utter harmfulness to the cause of the liberation of the working class and to exert every effort to restore and strengthen the illegal Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

#### THE NATURE AND ORGANISATIONAL FORMS OF PARTY WORK

Recognising that the experience of the last three years has undoubtedly confirmed the basic propositions of the resolution on

the organisational question passed by the conference in December (1908) and being of the opinion that on the basis of the incipient revival of the labour movement a further development of the organisational forms of Party work becomes possible along the same path, i.e., along the path of setting up illegal Social-Democratic nuclei surrounded by the widest possible network of legally existing labour societies of all kinds,

The conference is of the opinion:

1) That the illegal Party organisations must take a most active part in the leadership of the *economic struggle* (strikes, strike committees, etc.), and that co-operation in this field is necessary between the illegal Party nuclei and the trade unions, especially Social-Democratic nuclei in the trade unions and also the individual comrades who are active in the trade union movement;

2) That it is desirable, in conformity with the local conditions, to combine the Social-Democratic nuclei in the trade unions, which are organised on an *industrial* basis, with the Party nuclei which are built up on a territorial basis;

3) That it is necessary to display the greatest possible initiative in organising Social-Democratic work in legally existing societies: trade unions, reading rooms, libraries, all kinds of workers' recreation societies, in distributing trade union journals and in guiding the trade union press in the spirit of Marxism, in utilising the Duma speeches of the Social-Democrats, in training lecturers for legal meetings from among the workers, in setting up (in connection with the elections to the Fourth Duma) workers' and other electoral committees according to districts, streets, etc., in Social-Democratic agitation in connection with the municipal elections, etc.;

4) That strenuous efforts must be made to strengthen and increase the number of illegal Party nuclei, to discover new and most flexible organisational forms for these nuclei, to create and consolidate the leading illegal Party organisations in every town, and to propagate such forms of mass illegal organisation as "labour exchanges," Party meetings at factories, etc.;

5) That it is desirable to draw the propaganda circles into everyday *practical* work: distribution of illegal Social-Democratic and legally published Marxian literature, etc.;

6) That it is necessary to bear in mind that systematic literary Social-Democratic agitation and especially an illegal Party newspaper, appearing regularly and frequently, can assume great importance in the matter of establishing organisational contacts among the various illegal nuclei as well as among the various Social-Democratic nuclei in the legally existing workers' societies.

January 1912

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## THE REVOLUTIONARY REVIVAL

THE tremendous May strike of the proletariat all over Russia, accompanied by street demonstrations, the distribution of revolutionary manifestoes, and the delivery of revolutionary speeches before crowds of workers, clearly shows that Russia has entered upon a period of revolutionary revival.

This revival has not come as a bolt from the blue. No, it was prepared long ago by all the conditions of Russian life, and the mass strikes in connection with the Lena shootings and May Day only definitely marked its arrival. The temporary triumph of the counter-revolution was indissolubly bound up with a depression in the mass struggle of the workers. The number of strikers gives, although only an approximate, yet an absolutely objective and precise idea of the magnitude of that struggle.

During the ten years preceding the revolution, from 1895 to 1904, the average number of strikers was 43,000 per annum (roughly); in 1905—2,750,000, in 1906—1,000,000, in 1907—750,000. The three years of the revolution were marked by a rise in the strike movement of the proletariat *unparalleled anywhere in the world*. Its decline, which began in 1906 and 1907, was definitely marked in 1908—175,000 strikers. The *coup d'état* of June 16 [3], 1907, which restored the tsarist autocracy in alliance with the Duma of the Black Hundred landlords and commercial-industrial money-bags, was the inevitable result of the decline of the revolutionary energy of the masses.

The three years 1908-10 were the period of the high tide of the Black Hundred counter-revolution, of liberal bourgeois renegacy and of proletarian despondency and disintegration. The number of strikers steadily dropped, reaching 60,000 in 1909 and 50,000 in 1910.

However, a marked change set in at the end of 1910. The demon-

strations in connection with the death of the liberal, Muromtsev, and of Leo Tolstoy, and also the student movement, clearly indicated that there was something new in the air, that a certain change had taken place in the mood of the democratic masses. The year 1911 witnessed a slow transition to an offensive on the part of the working masses: the number of strikers rose to 100,000. Signs from various quarters indicate that the weariness, the stupor generated by the triumph of the counter-revolution, is passing away, that once again the tendency is towards revolution. In summing up the situation, the All-Russian Conference in January 1912 stated:

"The beginning of a political revival is to be observed among wide circles of democracy and above all among the proletariat. The workers' strikes in 1910-11, the beginning of demonstrations and proletarian meetings, the beginning of a movement among the urban bourgeois democracy (the student strikes), etc.—all these are manifestations of the growing revolutionary spirit among the masses against the June 16 [3] regime."<sup>1</sup> (See the Announcement of the Conference, p. 18.)

By the second quarter of this year this spirit had risen to such an extent that it manifested itself in the actions of the masses, and it created a *revolutionary upsurge*. The course of events during the past year and a half shows with perfect clarity that there is nothing accidental in this revival, that its advent is quite natural and that it is inevitably conditioned by the whole of the previous development of Russia.

The Lena shootings served as the stimulus which transformed the revolutionary temper of the masses into the revolutionary upsurge of the masses. Nothing is more false than the liberal invention, which is repeated after the liquidators by Trotsky and the Vienna *Pravda*, that the "struggle for the right of coalition is the *basis* of both the Lena tragedy and the powerful echo it found in the country." The right of coalition was neither the specific nor the principal demand in the Lena strike. It was not lack of the right of coalition that the Lena shootings revealed, but the lack of

<sup>1</sup> Lenin quotes here the resolution of the Prague Conference of 1912, "The Present Situation and the Tasks of the Party." See present volume, page 150.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*



freedom from provocation, lack of general rights, lack of freedom from wholesale tyranny.

The Lena shootings as we have already made clear in *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 26, was an exact reflection of the *entire* regime of the Third-of-June monarchy. It was not the struggle for one of the *rights* of the proletariat, even though one of the cardinal, one of the most important, that was characteristic of the Lena events. What was characteristic of these events was the complete absence of elementary legality in *all* respects. The characteristic feature was that an *agent-provocateur*, a spy, a secret service agent, a servant of the tsar, resorted to mass shootings without any political reason whatever. It is precisely this general tyranny in Russian life, it is precisely the hopelessness and impossibility of waging a struggle for particular *rights*, precisely this incorrigibility of the tsar's monarchy and of its entire regime, which stood out so clearly against the background of the Lena events that they *inflamed* the masses with *revolutionary* fire.

Though the liberals were and are straining every nerve in the effort to stamp the Lena events and the May strikes as a trade union movement and a struggle for "rights," still, to everyone who is not blinded by the liberal (and liquidationist) controversies, something different becomes obvious. What is obvious is the *revolutionary* character of the mass strike which was especially emphasised in the St. Petersburg May Day manifesto, issued by the various groups of Social-Democrats (and even by one workers' social-revolutionary group!), which we reprint in full in our news section, and which repeats the slogans advanced by the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in January 1912.

And it is not really the slogans that provide the main corroboration of the revolutionary character of the Lena and May strikes. The slogans *formulated* what the facts showed. These facts: the mass strikes affecting district after district, their enormous growth, the rapidity with which they spread, the boldness of the workers, the greater frequency of meetings and revolutionary speeches, the demand to cancel the fine for celebrating May Day, the combination of the political and the economic strike, familiar to us from the time

of the first Russian revolution—all this obviously points to the true character of the movement, *i.e., the revolutionary upsurge of the masses.*

Let us recall the experience of 1905. Events show that the *tradition* of the revolutionary mass strike is *alive* among the workers and that the workers at once took up and revived that tradition. The strike wave of 1905, unparalleled in the world, combining both the political and economic strike, involved 810,000 strikers during the first, and 1,277,000 during the last quarter of the year. According to approximate estimates the Lena strikes involved some 300,000 workers, those of May—400,000, and strikes continue to grow in number. Every new issue of the newspapers—even of the liberal newspapers—informs us how the strike conflagration is spreading. The second quarter of 1912 is not quite over, yet even now we get definite indications of the fact that, judging by the extent of the strike movement, the beginning of the revolutionary upsurge in 1912 is not *lower but rather higher* than the corresponding beginning in 1905.

It was the Russian revolution that for the first time developed on a large scale this method of agitation, of rousing and consolidating the masses and of drawing them into the struggle. Now the proletariat is applying this method once again and with a firmer hand. No power on earth could achieve what the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat is achieving by this method. An enormous country, with a population of 150,000,000, spread over a tremendous area, scattered, oppressed, deprived of all rights, ignorant, fenced off from “evil influences” by a swarm of authorities, police, spies—the *whole* of this country is beginning to get into a ferment. The most backward strata of the workers and peasants are coming into direct or indirect contact with the strikers. Hundreds of thousands of revolutionary agitators are suddenly appearing on the scene. Their influence is infinitely increased by the fact that they are indissolubly bound up with the lower strata, with the masses, they remain in their ranks, fight for the most urgent needs of *every* worker’s family, combine with this immediate struggle for the daily economic needs a political protest and struggle against the monarchy. For counter-revolution has roused in

millions and tens of millions of people a bitter hatred for the monarchy, the rudiments of an understanding of the latter's role, and now the slogan of the advanced workers of the capitals—long live the democratic republic—is moving ever onward through thousands of channels, in the wake of every strike, into the backward strata, to the remotest places, to the “people,” “into the depths of Russia”!

Very characteristic is the dissertation on strikes made by the liberal, Severyanin, which was gladly accepted by *Russkiye Vye-domosti*<sup>1</sup> and approvingly reprinted in *Rech*:

“Have the workers any grounds for adding economic or any other”(!) “demands to a May Day strike?” asks Mr. Severyanin; and he answers: “I am bold enough to think that there are none. Every economic strike can and must be begun only after a serious consideration of its chances of success. . . . That is why to connect such strikes particularly with May Day is more often than not unreasonable. . . . And it is rather strange: we celebrate the world labour festival and on that account demand a ten per cent increase on calico of such and such a quality.”

This is how a liberal reasons! And this boundless vulgarity, meanness and vileness is accepted with sympathy by the “best” liberal papers which claim to be democratic.

The coarsest greediness of a bourgeois, the vilest cowardice of a counter-revolutionary—that is what is concealed behind the showy phrases of a liberal. He wants to safeguard the pockets of the employers. He wants an “orderly,” “harmless” demonstration in favour of the “right of coalition”! And the proletariat, instead of this, draws the masses into a *revolutionary* strike, which indissolubly links up politics with economics, a strike which attracts to itself the most backward strata by the success of the struggle for an immediate improvement in the workers' life, and which, at the same time, rouses the people *against the tsarist monarchy*.

Yes, the experience of 1905 created a profound and great tradition of mass strikes. And it must not be forgotten to what these strikes in Russia are leading. Stubborn mass strikes are indissolubly bound up in our country with *armed insurrection*.

Let these words not be misinterpreted. We are not discussing a

<sup>1</sup> *Russian News*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

*call* for an uprising. Such a call would be most unwise at this juncture. What we are discussing is the establishment of a *connection* between a strike and insurrection in Russia.

How did the uprising of 1905 *grow*? In the first place, mass strikes, demonstrations and meetings caused the clashes between the crowd and the police and military forces to become more frequent. Secondly, the mass strikes roused the peasantry to a number of partial, sporadic, semi-spontaneous uprisings. Thirdly, the mass strikes very rapidly spread to the army and navy, causing clashes on an economic basis (the "pea" and similar "riots") and then insurrections. Fourthly, counter-revolution *itself* started civil war by means of pogroms, the beating up of democrats, etc.

The Revolution of 1905 resulted in a defeat not because it went "too far," or because the December uprising was "artificial," as is the opinion of the renegades among the liberals, etc. On the contrary, the cause of the defeat was that the uprising did not go *far enough*, that the consciousness of its necessity was inadequately spread and was not thoroughly assimilated by the revolutionary classes, that the uprising was not unanimous, decisive, organised, simultaneous, aggressive.

Let us now see whether signs of *growth of uprising* can be observed at the present time. In order not to be carried away by revolutionary enthusiasm, let us call the *Octobrists* as witnesses. The German Union of Octobrists in St. Petersburg consists mainly of so-called "Left" and "constitutional" Octobrists who are particularly popular among the Cadets, and who are most capable (in comparison with the other Octobrists and Cadets) of observing events "objectively" without making it their aim to frighten the authorities with the prospect of revolution.

The *St. Petersburger Zeitung*, the organ of these Octobrists, wrote the following in its weekly political review of May 19 [6]:

"May has come. Independently of the weather, this month is usually not a very pleasant one for the inhabitants of the capital, because it begins with a *proletarian 'festival.'* This year, with the impression of the Lena demonstrations still fresh in the minds of the workers, the first of May was particularly dangerous. In the air of the capital, saturated with all kinds of rumours concerning strikes and demonstrations, there was a foreboding of a conflagration. Our loyal police were perceptibly agitated; they organised searches,

arrested individuals, mobilised big detachments to prevent street demonstrations. The fact that the police found nothing more intelligent to do than to search the editorial offices of the workers' papers and arrest their editors does not testify to a particularly profound understanding of the strings by which the toy regiments of the workers were pulled. Yet such strings exist. This is borne out by the disciplined character of the strike and by many other circumstances. That is why this May Day strike is so dreadful, the biggest strike of all we have witnessed so far—some 100,000 or perhaps even 150,000 workers of big and small workshops went on strike. It was only a peaceful parade, but the solidarity of this army was remarkable. And the more so since, in addition to the recent excitement of the workers, other alarming symptoms were noted. On various ships of our navy, *sailors* were arrested for revolutionary propaganda. Judging by all the information which has found its way into the press, the situation is not very good on our warships, which are not numerous as it is. . . . *Railwaymen* are also giving cause for disquietude. Nowhere, it is true, did things reach the stage of even an attempt to organise a strike, but arrests, especially such as are particularly remarkable, e.g., the arrest of A. A. Ushakov, the assistant chief of the Nicholas Railway Station, show that there is a certain danger even there.

"The revolutionary attempts of immature labour masses can, of course, have only a harmful effect on the result of the elections to the Duma. These attempts are the more foolhardy since ' . . . the tsar has appointed Manukhin, and the State Council has approved of workers' insurance'!!"

Such are the arguments of a German Octobrist. We on our part will observe that we have received precise local information about the sailors, information which proves that this affair has been exaggerated and inflated by *Novoye Vremya*. The secret police is obviously "working" in a provocative fashion. Premature attempts at an uprising would be utterly unwise. The workers' vanguard must understand that the principal conditions of a timely, i.e., victorious, armed uprising in Russia are the support of the working class by the democratic peasantry and the active participation of the army.

Mass strikes in revolutionary epochs have their objective logic. They scatter hundreds of thousands and millions of sparks in all directions—and round about there is inflammable material of most extreme bitterness, unprecedented pangs of hunger, boundless tyranny, shameless and cynical mockery at the "pauper," the "muzhik," the private soldier. Add to this the unbridled Jew-baiting and incitement to pogroms carried on by the Black Hundreds, a baiting fostered and directed in an underhand fashion by the Court gang of the dull-witted and blood-thirsty Nicholas Romanov. . . .

"So it was and so it will be." The Minister Makarov uttered these words of revelation at his own peril, at the peril of his class and his landlord tsar!

The revolutionary upsurge of the masses imposes great and responsible duties on every worker Social-Democrat, on every honest democrat. "To give all possible support to the incipient mass movement" (now we should say: the *revolutionary* mass movement *which has now commenced*) "and to secure its expansion under the banner of the full, uncurtailed slogans of the Party"—this is how the All-Russian Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party defined these duties. The Party slogans—a democratic republic, the eight-hour day, the confiscation of all the landlords' estates—must become the slogans of the *entire* democracy, the slogans of the *people's* revolution.

In order to support and extend the movement of the masses, we require *organisation and organisation*. Without an illegal Party it is impossible to conduct this work, and it is quite useless talking about it. In supporting and extending the onslaught of the masses we must carefully take into account the experience of 1905, and while explaining the need for and inevitability of an uprising, we must warn against and put a restraining hand upon *premature* attempts at uprising. The growth of mass strikes, the drawing of other classes into the struggle, the state of the organisations, the temper of the masses—all this will of itself indicate the moment when all forces will have to unite in a unanimous, determined, aggressive, recklessly bold onslaught of the revolution upon the tsarist monarchy.

Without a victorious revolution there will be no freedom in Russia.

Without the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy by a proletarian and peasant uprising, there will be no victorious revolution in Russia.

June 1912.

## THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL- DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

*To the Executive Committee of the German  
Social-Democratic Party*

DEAR COMRADES:

Recently we received a copy of a letter sent to you by the Foreign Committee of the Lettish Social-Democrats dated June 24 [11]. We did not think it necessary to explain the queer plan of these Letts to you, as we were of the opinion that no well-informed person would treat this plan seriously. However, from your letter to us of July 22 [9] we learned with surprise that you propose to adopt that plan. This compels us to express our emphatic protest, which we hereby send you. Objectively, the intention of the Executive Committee is nothing short of an attempt to contribute to the split in our Party (the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party) and to the creation of a new party hostile to us. This is unparalleled in the history of the whole International. We shall explain this in detail to the German comrades.

### THE SITUATION IN THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY SINCE JANUARY 1912

In January 1912 the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. was held at which delegates from the following organisations attended: the St. Petersburg, Moscow, Moscow Regional, Kazan, Saratov, Tiflis, Baku, Nikolayev, Kiev, Ekaterinoslav, Vilna and Dvinsk organisations. This conference restored the Party, elected a new Central Committee in place of the one destroyed by the liquidators, and was forced to declare these liquidators to be outside of the Party. (See pamphlet, *The Anonymous Writer of the "Vorwärts" and the Situation in the R.S.D.L.P.*, which was sent to the Executive Committee; it mentioned the protests of the li-

liquidators and of the national organisations: the Poles, the Letts, the Bund and the groups abroad.)

In January also a meeting was held for the purpose of setting up an Organisation Committee to convene a new conference, a "general Party conference," as it was called by the liquidators and their friends.

In their letter to the Executive Committee of June 24 [11], the Letts affirmed that this "Organisation Committee" was formed by the following organisations and tendencies: the Bund, the Lettish Social-Democrats, the Caucasian Regional Committee, the Menshevik *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, the Vienna *Pravda* and the *Vperyod* group.

Thus, on one side, there is the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. that was elected at the conference by the Russian organisations, i.e., those working in Russia (the opponents call it the Leninist tendency); on the other side, the so-called Organisation Committee, which promises the convocation of a "general" Party conference.

#### WHAT IS THE RELATION OF THE HITHERTO NEUTRAL RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS TO THE SO-CALLED ORGANISATION COMMITTEE?

Plekhanov, the best known of the Mensheviks, who had been fighting resolutely against the destruction of the Party by the liquidators, did not attend the January Party Conference, although he was invited. In April 1912 he published his correspondence with the representative of the Organisation Committee. (See his *Diary of a Social-Democrat*, No. 16.)

Plekhanov refused to take part in the so-called Organisation Committee on the ground that the Bund was not calling a conference of the existing Party organisations, but an "inaugural conference," i.e., a conference intended to form a new party. The so-called initiating groups, which in reality are the only groups that support the Organisation Committee, are, according to Plekhanov's statement, liquidationist groups, which do not belong to the Party and want to form a new party. In April 1912, Plekhanov wrote: "The new conference is being called by the liquidators."



In July, No. 3 of the Organisation Committee's *Listok* appeared. It did not contain a word, not even a hint of a reply to Plekhanov. One can judge from this how the Executive Committee is kept informed by the Letts, by the very Letts who complain that the "Leninist" Central Committee does not reply to the letters of the Organisation Committee.

Is there anything strange in the fact that the Central Committee of the Party, of the old Party, does not reply to those who, according to the hitherto neutral Plekhanov, are creating a new party?

The Organisation Committee must first of all prove to the neutral Plekhanov that it is not forming a new party and is not liquidating the old one.

The Letts who are taking part in the Organisation Committee and who appealed to the Executive Committee on June 24 [11] should now, after half a year's struggle of this Organisation Committee of the liquidators against the Party, show by facts and documents the results of this struggle; instead of this they show to the Executive Committee:

#### POTEMKIN VILLAGES OF THE LIQUIDATORS <sup>1</sup>

The Letts proposed that the Executive Committee convene eleven "organisational" centres, organisations and factions of Russian Social-Democracy. That is literally what they stated. (See page 4 of the letter of the Letts to the Executive Committee of June 24 [11].)

Hitherto, all over the world parties have been formed of local organisations united by a single central institution. But in 1912, the Russian and the Lettish liquidators made a great discovery: henceforth it will be possible to create a party consisting of "centres, organisations and factions."

According to the latest Lettish liquidationist electoral geometry, the eleven organisational centres, organisations and factions consist of: first, the Organisation Committee; and, secondly, the six

<sup>1</sup> When Catherine II made a tour of the South of Russia which had just been conquered and laid waste by her favourite, Potemkin, the latter erected a number of stage scene villages along the route in order to impress her with the wealth and beauty of the country he had just gained for her.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

factions, or organisations, or centres which comprise that Organisation Committee. The letter of the Letts states explicitly: "Points 2 to 7 inclusive form the Organisation Committee."

Thus the groups of the intelligentsia that are dissolving the Party obtain a treble vote, like the aristocracy in the "rotten boroughs":

1) The Caucasian Regional Committee is a fictitious organisation;

2) Ditto, represented by the Paris *Golos*, although *Golos* has no permanent mandate from the Caucasus;

3) Ditto, represented by the Organisation Committee.

We assert that the Russian workers will indignantly and contemptuously reject the idea of discussing the question concerning double candidatures, *i.e.*, the attempt of the liquidators conjointly with the insignificant groups abroad to cause a split, the more so since these groups represent only disruptionist intellectuals.

We categorically assert that not a single one of the groups abroad that are waging a struggle against the Party has during the past half year received a mandate from any of the organisations in Russia to run their organs or issue leaflets. The Letts wish to prove the contrary to the Executive Committee; let them, then, mention in the Russian press at least one such mandate issued prior to July 22 [9].

*Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* is not an organ of any Russian organisation.

Nor is Trotsky's Vienna *Pravda* an organ representing any Russian organisation. Three years ago *Pravda* was the organ of the Ukrainian "Spilka" (Southern Russia), but "Spilka" annulled its mandate long ago.

Neither *Vperyod*, nor Plekhanov, or the "Party Bolsheviks" publishes any journals as the Party organs of any organisation in Russia.

It is very easy to refer to groups which do not exist in reality. Nor is it difficult to print correspondence expressing "sympathy." But in order to conduct, even for half a year, an organ of an organisation working in Russia, it is necessary to have regular contacts, as well as the complete confidence of the masses of workers in the districts, unity of views on tactics—all of which can come

<sup>1</sup> Ukrainian for league or union—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

only as a result of joint work over a long period. The grouplets abroad which are being mobilised against the Party by the Lettish and Bundist disrupters lack all this.

As regards the P.P.S.<sup>1</sup> we shall say briefly: it is *not a Social-Democratic* organisation. It never formed part of the Social-Democratic Labour Party. There is only one reason for inviting it, namely, it "promises" to become Social-Democratic and join the liquidators! For the disrupters and lovers of splits, this, of course, is quite an adequate reason! If we are to invite the Polish Socialist Party to take part in joint deliberations, why not also invite the Socialist-Revolutionaries who take part in the elections to the Duma, the Zionist-Socialists, the Lettish League of Socialist-Revolutionaries, and similar "tendencies"?

#### THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC FRACTION IN THE THIRD DUMA

Among the organisational centres the Executive Committee has included the grouplets abroad, while on the other hand *it did not invite the Social-Democratic fraction in the Duma*. It is incredible, yet it is a fact. It will be useful for the Russian workers to know how Trotsky and Co. are misleading our foreign comrades.

In their letter to the Executive Committee of June 24 [11], the Letts write:

"As regards the Social-Democratic Duma fraction, there can be no suggestion of it acting as a mediator in the question of material assistance for the election campaign, because the Duma session is drawing to a close and, simultaneously, the Duma fraction thereby loses its mandates." (P. 2 of the frequently quoted letter.)

This is either a piece of deliberate deception or boundless political ignorance, which clearly enough indicates to what extent the Letts in Brussels are informed about the elections in Russia.

The letter is dated June 24 [11]. On June 22 [9], the Third Duma was officially dissolved for an indefinite period, but all the deputies, including also the Social-Democrats, retained their mandates. The latter *are even now Duma deputies*—this is known to every worker in Russia who is not illiterate. But this is unknown to the slanderers of the Party abroad.

The only legally existing Social-Democrats in Russia who. no

<sup>1</sup> The Polish Socialist Party.—*Ed.*

matter in what part of the country they may be, form the only official organisation, are precisely the members of the Social-Democratic fraction of the Third Duma.

All the liquidators hate this fraction. The leaflets of the liquidators (*Nasha Zarya*) heap abuse and insinuations upon it, all the disruptors abroad spread gossip about it. And why? Because the majority of the fraction, in which the Party Mensheviks were always predominant, always determinedly fought the liquidators and helped to render them quite harmless in St. Petersburg.

In the pamphlet *The Anonymous Writer, etc.*, we published an important fact. No one could say a word to refute it. Only *two* members of the fraction regularly contribute to the liquidationist newspapers. *Eight* members of the fraction regularly contribute to the anti-liquidationist newspapers.

Both the Letts and Trotsky propose that the Executive Committee exclude from the conference this, the only All-Russian body which has preserved unity! Even if the Letts had erred, and on June 24 [11] were ignorant of what was known to all the workers in Russia, why did they themselves not take the trouble prior to July 22 [9]—i.e., after the expiration of a whole month—to correct their error? Some mistakes are very useful to those who make them.

The intention of the Letts and the liquidators who deceived the Executive Committee is, by means of a *bloc* of fictitious grouplets abroad, to foist liquidationist candidates on us and to obtain money by fraud from the German workers, in spite of the majority of the Party in Russia, in spite of the majority of the Social-Democratic fraction in the Duma. Such is the gist of the long speeches (of the Letts, Bundists, Trotsky and Co.).

But this deception will not go unpunished.

#### OFFICIALLY VERIFIABLE DATA ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE LIQUIDATORS COMPARED WITH THAT OF THE PARTY

Every sensible person understands that the empty phrases concerning the mythical secret "organisations" alleged to be in sympathy with the liquidators do not deserve any credence. We assert that all the organisations of the liquidators in Russia—are fictitious.

It is difficult for those who have no information on the state of affairs in Russian Social-Democratic circles to get at the truth. But even they can get at the truth if they search the documents, test their meaning and take nothing on trust. We have already quoted the first commonly known fact, which is open to verification, *viz.*, the division of forces in the Social-Democratic fraction in the Duma between the liquidators and anti-liquidators.

But now, after half a year's struggle between the liquidators and the Party, other entirely objective and still more convincing facts are available.

In the letter of June 24 [11] (pp. 5 and 6), the Letts mentioned the legal Marxian papers in St. Petersburg. They name *Zhivoye Dyelo*<sup>1</sup> and *Nevsky Golos*<sup>2</sup> which conduct propaganda on behalf of a Menshevik tendency (that of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*) and contrast them with the newspapers *Zvezda*<sup>3</sup> and the St. Petersburg *Pravda* (not to be confused with Trotsky's liquidationist Vienna *Pravda*), which, according to the assertion of the Letts, are "owned and conducted by the Lenin group."

Even though this assertion is inept, the Letts have involuntarily adduced a serious fact against the liquidators.

While the term "open party" is only an empty, liberal phrase of the liquidators, open *activity* in the Duma and in the press is the principal activity of Marxian propaganda. It is here, and only here, that it is possible to discover facts which objectively show the relative strength of the liquidators and of the anti-liquidators.

There are no other political All-Russian organs except those named by the Letts. The liquidators have *Zhivoye Dyelo* and *Nevsky Golos*; the anti-liquidators, *Zvezda* (recently named *Nevskaya Zvezda*) and the St. Petersburg *Pravda*. There are no other tendencies and factions in Russia either in the press or in the public mass arena; all the groups abroad named by the Letts are mere ciphers.

We now have the results of the half-year's activity of both tendencies.

During this half year (January-June 1912) all the Russian par-

<sup>1</sup> *Living Cause*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Neva Voice*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

<sup>3</sup> *The Star*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

ties started, and have already completed, their preparations for the elections. Only six or eight weeks now remain until the elections. Most of the electoral lists have been drawn up. In fact, the outcome of the elections is already predetermined precisely by this half-year's preparation.

"Points" 1-7 in the list of the Letts declared themselves for the liquidators (the Organisation Committee, the Bund, Lettish Social-Democracy, *Golos*, the Vienna *Pravda*, the Caucasian Regional Committee, *Vperyod*). The anti-liquidators were supported by the Central Committee which unites the Russian organisations, i.e., those functioning in Russia (only the "Leninist tendency" as the liquidators assert).

Let us see what both tendencies have done.

From January 14 [1] to July 13 [June 30], 1912, the liquidators published in St. Petersburg sixteen issues of the newspaper *Zhivoye Dyelo* and five issues of the newspaper *Nevsky Golos*—twenty-one issues in all.

During the same six months the anti-liquidators published thirty-three issues of the newspaper *Zvezda*, fourteen issues of the newspaper *Nevskaya Zvezda* and fifty-three issues of the newspaper *Pravda*—in all a hundred issues.

Twenty-one against one hundred!

Such is the correlation of forces between the liquidators and the Party in Russia. The data concerning the newspapers are open data; anyone can check and substantiate them.

How do matters stand with the circulation of the newspapers? The Letts assert that the liquidators have issued 30,000 copies. Let us assume that this is not exaggerated. A person who saw Comrade Haase and other members mentioned to the Executive Committee the figure of 60,000 copies as the circulation of the anti-liquidationist newspapers. This correlation reduces the influence of the liquidators, as compared with that of the Party, to 1:10.

Even though information concerning the circulation has not been published and therefore may appear exaggerated, other data have been published which are more important and more convincing.

This is the information concerning the connection of the liquidators and of the Party with the masses of the workers in Russia.

OPEN VERIFIABLE DATA CONCERNING THE CONNECTIONS OF  
THE LIQUIDATORS AND OF THE PARTY WITH THE MASSES  
OF THE WORKERS IN RUSSIA

The data concerning the number of issues of newspapers published and their circulation do not yet fully prove the ascendancy of the Party over the liquidators. Even grouplets of liberal intellectuals can publish newspapers. Any newspaper which is "friendly to the workers" or even a liberal newspaper of a radical shade will always find many readers in Russia. Apart from the workers, it will be read by the liberals and also by the petty-bourgeois democrats.

Facts are available, however, which much more simply and clearly reveal the connections of the liquidators and of the Party with the masses of the workers in Russia.

These are the data on the funds collected for the purpose of publishing workers' publications.

Agitation has been carried on for a long time among the workers in Russia for collections to enable the publication of a workers' newspaper. It was obvious to all that without such a newspaper, participation in the elections would almost be a fiction. A newspaper is the principal weapon in an election campaign, the principal means for Marxian agitation among the masses.

But where is the money for the newspaper to come from?

It is necessary to organise collections among the workers. These collections form a fund and show the strength of the connections of this or that group. They are an indication of the authority of the groups, the confidence placed in them by the workers, their real influence over the proletarian masses.

Such collections for a workers' newspaper were started in St. Petersburg at the beginning of 1912. Six months—from January 14 [1] to July 13 [June 30]—is an adequate period. The data concerning the collections are published in all the above-named newspapers, both liquidationist and anti-liquidationist.

The conclusions drawn from these data covering half a year serve as the best material—an open, complete, objective, final answer to the question of the correlation of the forces of the

liquidators and of the Party in Russia. Therefore, in the appendix we have given a full translation of all the accounts of money collections for a daily workers' newspaper taken from nearly all the above-mentioned newspapers for that half year.

Here we quote only the totals.

During the half year, the anti-liquidationist newspapers published accounts concerning 504 money collections among groups of workers, i.e., collections regarding which the groups of workers which made the collections are actually named. These collections were made in fifty Russian cities and factory settlements.

During the same half year—from January 14 [1] to July 13 [June 30], 1912—the liquidationist newspapers published accounts of fifteen money collections among groups of workers. These collections were made in five Russian cities.<sup>1</sup>

Here are the precise accounts:

COLLECTIONS BY WORKERS' GROUPS FOR A WORKERS' DAILY FROM  
JANUARY 14 [1] TO JULY 13 [JUNE 30], 1912:

	<i>In liquidationist newspapers</i>	<i>In anti-liquidationist newspapers</i>
January .....	0	14
February .....	0	18
March .....	7	76
April .....	8	227
May .....	0	135
June .....	0	34
	<hr/> 15	<hr/> 504

DITTO: THE PRINCIPAL DISTRICTS OF RUSSIA

St. Petersburg .....	10	415
South Russia .....	1	51
Moscow .....	2	13
North and West Russia .....	1	12
The Urals and Volga .....	0	6
Caucasus, Siberia, Finland .....	1	7
	<hr/> 15	<hr/> 504

<sup>1</sup> In spite of the gossip spread by the liquidators, it was precisely these collections, amounting to over 12,000 marks, together with the help previously rendered by the German comrades, that formed the basic fund of our Social-Democratic press in Russia. The full translation, mentioned in the text, of all the accounts of money collections published by the various Social-Democratic newspapers in the course of half a year was sent to the Executive Committee, the Auditing Committee and to Bebel.



After a half year's struggle against the Party, the liquidators were utterly routed.

The liquidators do not count at all in the Russian Social-Democratic labour movement. This is proved by the above-quoted data, which anyone can verify. Such are the facts published in Russia for a whole half-year, notwithstanding the bragging of Trotsky and the liquidators.

It should be noted that Trotsky is a contributor to *Zhivoye Dyelo*. Furthermore, the Letts themselves, in the letter of June 24 [11], admit that all six groups, including Trotsky, the Menshevik *Golos*, the leader of the newspapers *Zhivoye Dyelo* and *Nevsky Golos*, form the so-called Organisation Committee. Therefore, our data prove that it is not only the liquidators, but all their friends abroad who give themselves such airs, who are of no account in the Social-Democratic labour movement in Russia.

On the average only one group of workers in Russia out of thirteen sides with them.

We quote here also the addresses and the dates of publication of all the Social-Democratic newspapers in St. Petersburg:

#### LIQUIDATIONIST

1. *Zhivoye Dyelo* [*Living Cause*]. St. Petersburg, Bolshaya Moskovskaya, 16. No. 1—February 2 [January 20], 1912; No. 16 and last issue—May 11 [April 28], 1912 (suppressed).
2. *Nevsky Golos* [*Neva Voice*]. St. Petersburg, Kolokolnaya, 3. No. 1—June 2 [May 20], 1912; No. 5—July 11 [June 28], 1912. (Still exists at the present time—August 11 [July 29], 1912.)

#### ANTI-LIQUIDATIONIST

3. *Zvezda* [*Star*]. St. Petersburg, Razyezhaya, 10, Apt. 14. No. 1 (37)—January 19 [6], 1912; No. 33 (69)—May 5 [April 22], 1912 (suppressed).
4. *Nevskaya Zvezda* [*Neva Star*]. St. Petersburg, Nikolayevskaya, 33, Apt. 57. No. 1—March 10 [February 26], 1912; No. 2—May 16 [3], 1912; No. 14—July 7 [June 24], 1912 (still exists).
5. *Pravda* [*Truth*]. St. Petersburg, Nikolayevskaya, 37, Apt. 18. No. 1—May 5 [April 22], 1912; No. 53—July 13 [June 30], 1912 (still exists).

#### CONCLUSION

The candidates of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in the forthcoming Duma elections will be nominated by the local Party organisations without distinction of views and tendencies.

The minority of the Social-Democratic workers will everywhere have to submit to the majority.

All the noise about double candidatures is simply nonsense which only serves the purpose of frightening foreign comrades and of extracting money.

All that is needed to complete the picture is for the notorious ten "tendencies" to threaten to put up *ten* candidates and beg for money abroad for each of the candidates.

There will be no double candidatures. The liquidators are so weak that they are quite unable to put forward second candidates. We do not negotiate with a handful of liquidators who have betrayed the Party. Neither the Central Committee in Russia nor the local organisations take the liquidators seriously. Note, for example, the latest events in St. Petersburg. The liquidators stated in the newspaper, *Nevsky Golos* (No. 6), that joint conferences were held with them (the liquidators) in St. Petersburg to discuss the conducting of the election campaign. Both *Nevskaya Zvezda* (No. 16) and *Pravda* (No. 61) of July 21 [8] and 23 [10] announced that they had not sent any representatives to the conference; moreover, one participant in the conference announced in *Nevskaya Zvezda* that the workers all over Russia would carry out the decisions of the January Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

"The unity of the various tendencies," he declared, referring to the liquidators, "is altogether impossible in the Social-Democratic election campaign." (*Nevskaya Zvezda*, No. 16, July 21 [8], 1912.)

No financial assistance in the world will win the sympathies of the Russian workers for the liquidators. But it goes without saying that it is possible to set up fictitious second candidatures in various places with the money supplied by the Executive Committee. In that event the responsibility for such candidatures, which will in fact be candidatures of the German Executive Committee, will rest on the Executive Committee. *The money handed out to the liquidators who have no daily newspaper will help them to found a competing organ. This money will be used to organise a split by those who, throughout the many years of struggle, have shown that they are nonentities; the money will be used for journeys, etc., in*

*order to found a new party.* If the Executive Committee wants to assist the liquidators in one way or another, then, in spite of all our respect for the fraternal German Party, we shall be obliged to appeal to the International. Then we shall *prove* to the Vienna International Congress by *documents* that the Executive Committee has expressed its readiness, by means of monetary support, to help bring about a split in our Party, to set up double candidatures and to galvanise that corpse—the defeated liquidators. If the German comrades want to help the R.S.D.L.P., they must transfer the money, not to those who are organising a new party, but to the Central Committee of the old Party.

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE  
RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY

After the Executive Committee had cancelled the proposed conference it informed us that

“it is unable to give money to any of the Party groups in Russia for the election campaign until all of them jointly indicate to us” (the Executive Committee) “the institution that enjoys universal confidence and is authorised to receive and distribute funds.”

This pretended neutrality of the Executive Committee amounts in reality to a refusal to support the workers’ party in Russia because of the calumny heaped upon it by the grouplets abroad and by the “conference” of the liquidators.

Supplementing the remarks made above we regard it as our duty to add the following:

The Russian newspapers legally existing and conducted in a Marxian spirit are at the present time the most important, open organ of the masses of the Russian Social-Democratic workers in connection with the agitational work of the Party.

The newspapers appearing abroad which are illegal in Russia cannot, *in essence*, claim to possess the same importance as those mentioned above, although their importance *in principle* as a means for theoretically explaining the movement is extremely great. It is well known how easily, and sometimes thoughtlessly, such newspapers are founded by grouplets of Russian emigrants scattered abroad; these newspapers drag on a miserable existence amidst the same groups, and hardly ever reach the Russian mem-

bers of the Party. Therefore they cannot really be regarded as having any perceptible influence over Party life in Russia.

After half a year's struggle of the anti-liquidationist newspapers (from January to June 1912) there is now *only one* organ of the liquidators—*Nevsky Golos*. This newspaper has almost ceased to exist as a political organ. In the course of a month and a half (from June to the middle of August) only two numbers were published (Nos. 6 and 7). It is obvious that unless a newspaper of this kind draws its vital forces from close contact with the masses of the workers, it cannot withstand the police persecution that is raging in Russia against *all* the labour and, even against many quite moderate liberal newspapers.

The labour newspapers which carry great political weight and are of immediate and urgent importance are now the weekly *Nevskaya Zvezda* and the daily newspaper, *Pravda*. Both newspapers appear in St. Petersburg; our *political opponents* among the Lettish Social-Democrats have contemptuously dubbed them the organs of the "Lenin group." From the objective data adduced above which are always open for verification, it must be obvious to our German comrades that this "Lenin group" embraces, in fact, the overwhelming majority of the Russian Social-Democratic workers.

Hence, it is quite understandable why all the information emanating from the liquidators, and from groups and grouplets in sympathy with them, *do not deserve the least confidence*. All the rumours spread by these grouplets, together with the Jewish (Bund) and Lettish Social-Democrats, who have absolutely no immediate contact with the *Russian* movement, about an alleged general conference, called or about to be called, representing all "tendencies," turn out to be pure inventions. No such conference, even if it actually took place, would play *any serious part* in the struggle of the Russian proletariat. Therefore, in essence, if we may venture to use a strong word, what we have here is a fraud.

In order to make the undoubtedly important political facts bearing on this question still clearer to our German Party comrades, we shall quote in conclusion a few extracts from an article by Axelrod, one of the liquidationist leaders, which appeared in the last issue of the monthly, *Nasha Zarya*.

Axelrod writes:

"The idea of a 'non-factional' Social-Democratic.. organ is at present a utopia and moreover a utopia... that runs counter to the interests of the political development of the Party.... We may say that we have no factions in an organisationally completed form; instead, we have various circles and grouplets of which some hold more or less definite political, tactical and organisational views, whereas others vacillate in various directions, hampering the former. The crucial point and chief source of internal Party discord is, on the one hand, the differences in the attitude of the various Party circles to the new, open Social-Democratic and labour movement and... on the other hand, the essential differences in the domain of the immediate political tasks and the political tactics of Russian Social-Democracy. The questions of both categories become... just now... especially urgent questions of the day.... It is on these questions that Russian Social-Democracy is split into two principal camps.... The question is whether the labour organ" (proposed by certain workers in St. Petersburg and by many intellectuals abroad) "will be able to take up a neutral position between these two opposite camps and whether such a position is admissible on principle. Obviously, it is not.... To talk about 'non-factionalism' as the only panacea, when such conditions prevail in the Party, means... deceiving oneself and others as to the real state of affairs in Social-Democracy.... Factional organisation and consolidation are the prime duty and the urgent tasks of the partisans of Party reform, or rather, of the revolution" (in the Party).<sup>1</sup>

In the last words, Axelrod obviously refers to the liquidators. We can only advise our German Party comrades, when they hear from various quarters about "non-factionalism," or about a non-factional conference with the participation of the liquidators, to demand, for the purpose of clearer orientation, a full translation of Axelrod's above-quoted article for the German Social-Democratic press. Then it will be possible to form a correct idea about certain fables.

THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN  
OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY:  
"SOTSIAL-DEMOKRAT"

August [July] 1912.

<sup>1</sup> The words we have put in parentheses were inserted by Lenin in Axelrod's article. In the German text, however, these words were not put in parentheses.—*Ed.*

## THE PLATFORM OF THE REFORMISTS AND THE PLATFORM OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

THE revolutionary revival in Russia made itself clearly felt in the first half of 1912. The number of political strikers, as calculated by the employers, reached 515,000 for five months. A specially important document reprinted in full in the central organ, No. 27, namely, the May Day manifesto of the St. Petersburg workers, testifies to the nature of the slogans of the strikers, of their demands, of the political content of their demonstrations, meetings, etc.

The St. Petersburg workers came out on those memorable days not with reformist slogans, but with the slogans of revolutionary Social-Democracy: a constituent assembly, an eight-hour day, confiscation of the landlords' estates, the overthrow of the tsarist government, a democratic republic.

The mutinies and attempted mutinies of soldiers and sailors in Turkestan, in the Baltic Fleet and on the Black Sea supplied a fresh *objective* confirmation of the fact that, after long years of reckless counter-revolution and of a lull in the labour movement, a new revolutionary revival had begun.

This revival coincided with the elections to the Fourth State Duma, in which all parties, all political tendencies *had* to present, in one form or another, their *general* appraisal of the political situation. Now if we want to analyse our political tasks seriously, not as the pious wishes of the grouplets, but as the tasks of the working class, if we want to examine the programmes and platforms in a Marxian way, to compare them with the facts of the mass struggle and with the actions of *all* the classes of the given society, we must also test the various electoral programmes on the touchstone of *this revolutionary revival* of the masses. Because,

for Social-Democracy, elections are not a special political operation, not a means for catching votes by making all sorts of promises and declarations; they merely serve as a special occasion for agitating for the basic demands and for the principles of the political world outlook of the class conscious proletariat.

There can be no doubt about the programmes and platforms of all the government parties, from the Black Hundreds down to Guchkov. They express plain and open counter-revolution. That these parties lack the serious support not only of the working class and the peasants, but *even* of the broad strata of the bourgeoisie, is common knowledge. These latter strata have almost entirely turned away from the Octobrists.

The programmes and platforms of the liberal bourgeois parties have been published in part almost officially (the platform of the Moslem group<sup>1</sup>) and are partly known quite accurately through the "big" political press (the platforms of the "progressives" and of the Cadets). The *essence* of all these programmes and platforms has been inimitably expressed in the declarations of the garrulous Cadet, Gredeskul, which were reprinted in *Rech* whence they found their way into the Marxian press.

"A public *denial of the need* for a new revolution in Russia"—that is how Gredeskul himself formulated his views. (See *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 27, p. 3.) It was he, also, who opposed to the revolutionaries the *real* platform of liberalism (with the Cadets at its head): "What is required is *only* quiet, persistent, confident *constitutional* work."

We stress the words "real platform," for in Russia, as in all bourgeois countries, most platforms are mere *window dressing*.

The essence of the matter is what was admitted (in a rare fit of truthfulness) by Mr. Gredeskul. The liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie is *opposed* to a new revolution and upholds *only* constitutional reforms.

Social-Democracy, consistently, and bourgeois democracy (the Narodniki), with vacillations, uphold the "need for" a new revolution, for carrying on propaganda in favour of such a revolution.

<sup>1</sup> The Moslem group in the Duma.— *Ed. Eng. ed.*

The revival of the *mass struggle has begun*. The revolutionary Social-Democrats try to extend and consolidate it and help it to develop to a still higher plane, to the stage of *revolution*. The reformists, however, consider the revival to be mere "animation"; their policy is a policy directed towards obtaining constitutional concessions, constitutional reforms. The bourgeoisie and proletariat have, therefore, also at this "stage" of Russian history, entered into a struggle for influence over the "people," over the masses. No one can foretell the outcome of this struggle, yet no one can entertain any doubts as to the position which the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party must occupy in *this* struggle.

Thus, and thus only, can we approach the task of estimating the election platform of the *Party*—and the platform issued the other day by the "Organisation Committee" that was elected by the liquidationist conference.

The election platform of the Party, published by the Central Committee after the January conference, was drafted *before* the events of April and May. These events *confirmed* its correctness. There is one idea that runs through the whole platform: the criticism of the hopelessness, the utopianism of constitutional reforms in *present-day* Russia, and the propaganda of revolution. The slogans of the platform have been framed *precisely* in such a way as to express the revolutionary tasks with perfect clarity and to make it absolutely impossible to mistake them for promises of constitutional reforms. The platform of the Party represents a direct *appeal* of a revolutionary Social-Democrat to *hundreds of thousands* of political strikers, to those who are in the front ranks of the vast peasant army, to whom the tasks of the uprising are *explained*. A revolutionary party cannot even dream of a better test for its platform, of a better confirmation of it by life itself than this direct response to the explanations of the Party—the May strikes and the attempted mutinies in June and July.

Look at the platform of the liquidators. Its liquidationist essence is artfully concealed by Trotsky's revolutionary phrases. This camouflage may sometimes blind naive and altogether inexperienced people, and may even appear to be "reconciliation" be-



tween the liquidators and the Party. But the most cursory examination will rapidly dissipate this self-deception.

The platform of the liquidators was written *after* the May strikes and the attempts at an uprising in the summer. And in trying to discover a concrete practical answer to the question of the essence of this platform, the first thing we ask is: *how* does it appraise those strikes and those attempts?

"The economic revival . . ." "... by the growth of its strike movement, the proletariat has signaled the impending new social revival..." "...the powerful April movement of the proletariat demanding the right of *association*"—that is *all* the liquidators' platform says about the April and May strikes.

But this is untrue! It is a crying distortion of the facts! The *principal* thing has been omitted—the *revolutionary* character of the political strike which was directed towards the *overthrow* of the government, *i.e.*, towards revolution, and *not* towards the attainment of a constitutional reform.

How could such an untruth be written in an illegal, revolutionary manifesto which is full of "Red" phrases? It *had to be*, because *such* is the *view* of the liberals and of the liquidators. They see the strikes as they wish them to be—a struggle for constitutional reforms. They do not see what they do not wish to see, namely, the revolutionary upsurge. We liberals want to fight for reform, but not for revolution—such is the *truth* of the class position that found expression in the *untruth* of the liquidators.

In regard to the attempted uprisings we read "...the soldiers in the barracks . . . are driven by violence, humiliation and starvation to *outbursts of desperate protest*, then they are suppressed with bullets, the rope," etc.

This is a liberal appraisal. We revolutionary Social-Democrats regard the attempts at uprising as the *beginning of the uprising of the masses*, as an unsuccessful, untimely, incorrect beginning; but we know that the *masses learn* how to rise successfully only from the experience of unsuccessful uprisings, just as the Russian workers, by a series of unsuccessful and sometimes particularly unsuccessful political strikes in 1901-04, learned to organise the successful strike of October 1905. We say: the workers and

peasants who are most stupefied by the barracks *have begun* to rebel. Hence the plain and obvious conclusion: it must be *explained* to them for what purpose and how they should prepare a *successful* uprising.

The liberals judge otherwise. The soldiers are "driven" to "outbursts of *desperate* protest," they say. For a liberal, a soldier who mutinies is not the subject of the revolution, not the first herald of the rebellious masses, but an *object* of governmental evil ("driven to desperation"), who serves the purpose of demonstrating that evil.

See how bad our government is: it *drives* the soldiers to *desperation* and then suppresses them with bullets—says the liberal! (the conclusion being: now, if we liberals were in power we would not have soldiers' mutinies).

See how revolutionary energy is maturing among the broad masses—says the Social-Democrat—even the soldiers and sailors who are stupefied by barracks drill are beginning to rise, and, rising badly, they teach how to make a successful uprising.

As you see, the liquidators "have interpreted" (in the senatorial sense of the word interpret) the revolutionary revival in Russia during the spring and the summer.

\* Thereupon they "interpreted" the programme of our Party.

The programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party states:

"The Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party sets itself the *immediate* political task of overthrowing the tsarist autocracy and substituting for it a democratic republic, whose constitution *would ensure*: 1) the sovereignty of the people," etc., then follows the list of "liberties" and "rights."

One would think that this could not be misunderstood; the "immediate" task is the overthrow of the autocracy and its substitution by a republic, which would *ensure* the liberties.

The liquidators have altered all this.

In their platform we read:

"Social-Democracy calls on the people to fight for a democratic republic. . . ."  
 ". . . Striving for this object, which the people will be able to *achieve only as a result of the revolution*, Social-Democracy in the *present election campaign*" (hear! hear!) "calls on the toiling masses to rally to the fol-

lowing *immediate* demands: 1) universal, etc., suffrage . . . *for the elections to the State Duma*," etc.

The Socialist-Revolutionary liquidator, Mr. Peshekhonov, wrote in the autumn of 1906, when he was forming an "open party" (and almost succeeded . . . but the police interfered and clapped the lot into jail!), that the republic is a "*very remote prospect*," that "the question of a republic demands extreme caution," that the *immediate* demands now are reforms.

But the Socialist-Revolutionary liquidator was naive, simple, clumsy and blunt. Do the "European" opportunists speak in this way? No. They are more cunning, cleverer, more diplomatic. . . .

They do not renounce the slogan of a republic—what a libel! They only "interpret it" in due fashion, guided by considerations obvious to every man in the street. The man in the street states simply—well, it is a moot point whether there will be a revolution or not, and Trotsky repeats the same in a scholarly fashion in *Nasha Zarya* (No. 5, p. 21). Republic "*only* as a result of revolution," but what is "*immediate*" "in the present election campaign" is constitutional reforms!

Everything came out so smoothly: the republic is both recognised and relegated to the distant future. Heaps and heaps of r-r-revolutionary words, but in effect "in the present election campaign" (the whole of the platform is written exclusively for this *present campaign*!) the demands for reforms are put forward as "*immediate*."

Yes, yes, great "masters of diplomacy" deliberated at the liquidationist conference. . . . And what miserable masters! But although the latter may delight the narrow-circle diplomatists, although they may mislead the "simpleton-conciliators," the Marxists will talk to them in a different strain.

The man in the street is satisfied with that undoubted, holy and hollow truth that it is impossible to know beforehand whether a revolution will take place or not. A Marxist is not satisfied with this; he says: our propaganda and the propaganda of all the Social-Democratic workers *is one of the factors* which will determine whether the revolution will take place or not. Hundreds of thousands of political strikers, the foremost men of various

army units ask us, our Party, for what they should strive, for what cause they should rebel, what they should insist upon, whether they should extend the incipient upsurge to a revolution, or whether they should direct it towards a struggle for reforms.

Revolutionary Social-Democracy has given its answer to these questions; and these answers are more interesting and important than the philistine-Trotsky "nose-picking" contemplations: will there be a revolution or not, who knows?

Our answer is—criticism of the utopia of constitutional reforms, explanation of the falsity of hopes placed in them, all possible assistance to the *revolutionary* upsurge, utilisation of the election campaign *for that purpose*. Whether there will be a revolution or not *does not* depend on us *alone*. But we shall do *our* work and this work will never perish. It will sow the seeds of democracy and of proletarian independence deep among the masses, and these seeds are *bound* to shoot up either as a democratic revolution tomorrow, or as a socialist revolution the day after.

On the other hand, those who preach to the *masses* their vulgar, intellectual, Bundist-Trotskyist scepticism: "We don't know whether a revolution will take place or not, but what is '*immediate*' is reforms," are *already* corrupting the masses, preaching liberal utopias to the masses.

Instead of *permeating* the election campaign with the spirit of the given, real, "*present*" political situation, when half a million workers are engaged in revolutionary strikes, when the foremost men in the peasant army are shooting their aristocratic officers—instead of this they *delete* from their quasi-"European" (Oh! What Europeans, what thorough Europeans these liquidators are!), "parliamentary" considerations this real situation (in which there is very little that is "European," but quite a lot that is "Chinese," i.e., democratic revolutionary), and, dismissing it by means of a few non-committal phrases, they declare the reformist election campaign to be the *real* thing.

The Social-Democratic Party needs a platform for the elections to the Fourth Duma in order once more to explain to the masses, *in connection* with the elections, *and* on the occasion of these elections *as well as* in controversies concerning the elections, *the*

*need for, the urgency, the inevitability of the revolution.*

They, the liquidators, need a platform "*for*" the elections, *i.e.*, in order politely to push back the consideration of a revolution as an indefinite contingency and to declare as "*real*" the election campaign for a list of constitutional reforms.

The Social-Democratic Party wishes to utilise the elections in order, over and over again, to *stimulate* the masses to see the need for revolution, to see precisely the revolutionary revival which has begun. Therefore, the Social-Democratic Party, in its platform, says briefly and plainly to the electors *to the Fourth Duma*: *not* constitutional reforms, but a republic, *not* reformism, but revolution.

The liquidators are using the elections to the Fourth Duma in order to preach constitutional reforms and to *weaken* the idea of revolution. *For this purpose*, therefore, soldiers' mutinies are depicted as "outbursts of desperate protest," to which soldiers are "driven," and not as the *beginning* of a mass uprising which will grow or subside, according to whether or not, among other things, *all* the Social-Democratic workers of Russia at once begin to support it with all their might, with all their energy, with all their enthusiasm.

For this purpose the revolutionary May strikes have been "*interpreted*" as reformist.

For this purpose the Party programme has been "*interpreted*," and instead of the "*immediate*" task of creating a republic that will *ensure* liberties, it has been decreed to regard as *immediate* in the "*present election campaign*"—for the Fourth State Duma, don't laugh—the demand for various liberties.

What a lot of the old China there is in Russian life! What a lot of the old China there is in our tsarism and also in our liquidators, who wish to put the "*ceremonies*" of parliamentary struggle and reformism in a setting with the Purishkeviches and Treshchenkos<sup>1</sup> on top and the revolutionary attempts of the masses below! What a lot of the old China there is in these vain efforts of the intellectuals to defend themselves against the Khvostovs and Maka-

<sup>1</sup> The chief of gendarmes in the Lena gold-fields who ordered the shooting of the workers during the great strike in 1912—*Ed Eng ed.*

rows by producing a letter of recommendation from MacDonald and Jaurès, from Bissolati and Bernstein, from Kolb and Frank! . . .

The diplomatic "reconciliation" of liquidationist views with Party views that was staged by Trotsky at the liquidationist conference does not really "reconcile" anything. It does not obviate that greatest political fact, which determines the entire social and political situation of present-day Russia. That fact is the struggle between the reformist and the revolutionary Social-Democratic platforms; it is the pronouncement of the bourgeoisie, represented by its liberal party leaders, against the need for a new revolution in Russia and in favour of purely constitutional "work" to counterbalance the revolutionary strike of hundreds of thousands of proletarians, which is a call to the masses to commence a genuine struggle for freedom.

A bow to the reformists and another to revolutionary Social-Democracy do not remove this objective political fact, do not weaken its force and weight in the slightest degree. The good intentions to smooth away the differences created by this fact—even if we assume these intentions to be indeed fully "well meant" and sincere—are powerless to alter the irreconcilably hostile political tendencies which have sprung up from the situation created by counter-revolution.

The proletariat has risen with its revolutionary Social-Democratic banner, and on the eve of the Fourth, Black Duma, it will not lower it before the liberals, it will not furl it to please the reformists, it will not consent to modify or tone down its platform for considerations of group diplomacy.

The platform of revolutionary Social-Democracy versus the platform of reformism—it was under this sign that the May strikes took place. The Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is entering the elections to the Duma of the landlords and the priests under the same sign, and, under it, the entire work of the Party in that Duma and among the broad masses of the people will proceed.

November 1912

## VIOLATION OF UNITY UNDER COVER OF CRIES FOR UNITY

THE questions of the contemporary labour movement are in many respects vexed questions, especially for the representatives of the movement of yesterday, i.e., of the historical stage that has just passed. This refers above all to the questions of the so-called factionalism, split, etc. We frequently hear the intellectual participants in the labour movement making excited, nervous, almost hysterical requests not to touch these painful questions. For those who went through the long years of struggle of the various tendencies among the Marxists, for example, from 1900-01 onwards, many of the arguments about these painful questions may naturally be superfluous repetitions.

However, there are not many people left at the present time who participated in the fourteen years' struggle among the Marxists (still fewer who participated in the eighteen or nineteen years' struggle, if we reckon from the first symptoms of the appearance of "Economism"). The overwhelming majority of workers who at the present time fill the ranks of the Marxists either do not remember the old struggle, or are altogether ignorant of it. For this overwhelming majority (as is incidentally shown by the questionnaire conducted by our magazine) these painful questions are of especially great interest, and we propose to deal with these questions, which have been raised *as if* they were new (and they are really new to the young generation of the workers) by Trotsky's "non-factional workers' magazine" *Borba*.

### I. ON "FACTIONALISM"

Trotsky calls his new magazine "non-factional." He puts this word in the forefront in his advertisements. he stresses it in every

way in the editorials of *Borba*, and of the liquidationist *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta*,<sup>1</sup> in which an article by Trotsky was published on *Borba* before the latter appeared.

What, then, is "non-factionalism"?

Trotsky's "workers' magazine" is Trotsky's magazine *for* the workers, for it bears no trace either of workers' initiative or of contact with the workers' organisations. Wishing to be popular, Trotsky in this magazine for the workers explains to the readers the meaning of the words "territory," "factor," etc.

That is all very well. But why not explain to the workers the meaning of the term "non-factionalism" as well? Is this word really more intelligible than the terms territory and factor?

No, this is not the point. The point is that by this label of "non-factionalism" the worst representatives of the worst remnants of factionalism *mislead* the young generation of workers. It is worth while pausing to explain this point.

Factionalism is the principal distinguishing feature of the Social-Democratic Party in a definite historical period. Which period? The period from 1903 to 1911.

In order to explain most graphically what the essence of factionalism was, it is necessary to recall the concrete conditions of, say, 1906-07. The Party was then united, there was no split, but there was factionalism, *i.e.*, *in reality* there were *two* factions in the single Party, two virtually separate organisations. The local workers' organisations were united, but on every serious question, the two factions framed two tactics; the advocates of the respective tactics disputed among themselves within the united workers' organisations (for example, in 1906, when discussing the slogan, a Duma—or Cadet—Cabinet, or during the elections to the London Congress of 1907), and questions were settled *by a majority*: one faction was defeated at the united Stockholm Congress (1906), the other—at the united London Congress (1907).

These are commonly known facts in the history of organised Marxism in Russia.

<sup>1</sup> *Northern Workers' Gazette* —Ed Eng ed,



It is sufficient to recall these commonly known facts to perceive the blatant untruth which Trotsky is disseminating.

Since 1912, for more than two years, there has been *no* factionalism in Russia among the organised Marxists, no disputes on tactics in the *united* organisations, at the *united* conferences and congresses. There is a *complete* break between the Party—which in January 1912 formally announced that the liquidators *do not* belong to it—and the liquidators. Trotsky frequently calls this state of affairs a “split,” and further on we shall speak in particular of this qualification. However, the undoubted fact remains that the word “factionalism” is a *misnomer*.

This word, as we have already stated, is a repetition, a non-critical, unreasonable, senseless repetition of *what was true yesterday, i.e.*, in a period that has already passed. And when Trotsky talks to us about the “chaos of factional struggle” (see No. 1, pp. 5, 6 and many others), it at once becomes obvious *exactly which* dead past is speaking through his mouth.

Look at the present state of affairs from the standpoint of a young Russian worker; and nine-tenths of the organised Marxists of Russia are young workers. He sees before him widespread manifestations of three different sets of views and tendencies of the labour movement. The *Pravda*-ists, who are united around a newspaper with a circulation of 40,000 copies; the liquidators (15,000 copies), and the Left Narodniki<sup>1</sup> (10,000 copies). The circulation figures give the reader an idea of the extent to which a given doctrine bears a *mass* character.

But why talk of “chaos”? Trotsky is fond of sonorous and empty phrases—this is known, but the catchword “chaos” is not only a phrase; *in addition* to that it is an attempt to transplant (or rather, it is a vain attempt to transplant) to Russian soil in the present epoch the *émigré* relationships of the epoch of yesterday. That is the gist of the matter.

There is no “chaos” in the struggle between the Marxists and the Narodniki. This, we hope, *even* Trotsky will not venture to dispute. The struggle between the Marxists and the Narodniki has been

<sup>1</sup> Socialist-Revolutionaries.—Ed.

going on for over thirty years, since the very birth of Marxism. The cause of this struggle is the radical divergence of interests and points of view of two different classes: the proletariat and the peasantry. If there is "chaos" anywhere, it is in the heads of queer people who do not understand this.

What remains then? The "chaos" of the struggle between the Marxists and the liquidators? This again is untrue, for it is impossible to describe as chaos a struggle against a *tendency* which has been recognised by the entire Party as a tendency, and has been condemned since 1903. And those who are not unconcerned about the history of Marxism in Russia know that liquidationism is inseparably and most intimately connected with "Menshevism" (1903-08) and "Economism" (1894-1903), even as regards leaders and participants. Therefore, here too we have before us nearly twenty years of history. To treat the history of one's own party as "chaos" means that one is suffering from unpardonable empty-headedness.

But look at the present position *from the point of view* of Paris, or Vienna. Everything changes instantaneously. *Apart* from the *Pravda*-ists and the liquidators, there are *no* fewer than five Russian "factions," *i.e.*, separate groups, which claim to belong to the same Social-Democratic Party: Trotsky's group, the two *Vperyod* groups, the "Party Bolsheviks," the "Party Mensheviks." In Paris and Vienna (as an example I take two particularly large centres) this is well known to all Marxists.

And here Trotsky is to a certain extent correct! This is real factionalism, this is real chaos!

"Factionalism," *i.e.*, nominal unity (*in words* all belong to the same Party), but real dismemberment (*in reality* all the groups are independent of each other, and enter into negotiations and agreements with each other, just like sovereign powers).

"Chaos," *i.e.*, the absence of 1) objective, verifiable data concerning the connections of these factions with the labour movement in Russia, and the absence of 2) material necessary for judging the real ideological and political character of these factions. Take the period of two whole years—1912 and 1913. As is known, they were the years of revival and upsurge of the labour

movement, when everything that in any way resembled a *mass* tendency or trend (and in politics it is only masses that count) *could not but* influence the elections to the Fourth Duma, the strike movement, the legal newspapers, the trade unions, the insurance campaign, etc. During the whole of these two years not one, not a single one of those five factions abroad made the slightest impression *on any* of the manifestations of the mass labour movement in Russia just indicated.

This is a fact which anyone can easily verify.

And this fact proves that we were right in referring to Trotsky as the representative of the "worst remnants of factionalism."

Although Trotsky professes to be non-factional, he is known to all who are in the slightest degree acquainted with the labour movement in Russia as the representative of "Trotsky's faction"—there is factionalism here, for both the essential characteristics of it are present: 1) the nominal recognition of unity, and 2) group segregation in reality. This is a remnant of factionalism, for it is impossible to discover in it anything serious in the way of contacts with the mass labour movement of Russia.

Finally, it is the worst kind of factionalism, for there is *nothing* ideologically and politically definite about it. It cannot be denied that the *Pravda*-ists are definite (even our determined opponent, L. Martov, acknowledges our "unanimity and discipline" in regard to all the known formal decisions on all questions), and also the liquidators (they, or at least the most prominent of them, have a very definite political complexion, namely liberal and not Marxian).

It cannot be denied that sections of the factions which, like Trotsky's faction, really exist only from the Vienna-Paris, and not at all from the Russian, point of view are definite. For instance, the Machist *Vperyod* group holds definitely *Machist* theories; the "Party Mensheviks" definitely and resolutely reject these theories and defend Marxism, and at the same time they theoretically condemn the liquidators.

But Trotsky completely lacks a definite ideology and policy, for having the patent for "non-factionalism" only means (we shall deal with this in greater detail in a moment) having a patent

granting complete freedom to *flit* to and fro from one faction to another.

To sum up:

1) Trotsky does not explain and he himself does not understand the historical significance of the *ideological* differences among tendencies and factions in Marxism, although these differences fill the twenty years' history of Social-Democracy and concern the basic questions of present-day life (as we shall prove later on);

2) Trotsky has not understood the basic peculiarities of *factionalism*—nominal recognition of unity and virtual dismemberment;

3) Under the flag of "non-factionalism" Trotsky is upholding one of the factions abroad which is particularly devoid of ideas and has no basis in the labour movement in Russia.

Not all is gold that glitters. Trotsky's phrases are full of glitter and noise, but they lack content.

## II. ON SCHISM

Some may say: "If there is no factionalism, *i.e.*, nominal recognition of unity and dismemberment in reality, among you, *Pravda*-ists, then there is something worse—schism." That is precisely what Trotsky says. Unable to think out his ideas thoroughly and make his phrases tally, at one moment he cries out against factionalism and at another shouts: "schism is making one suicidal conquest after another." (No. 1, p. 6.)

This statement can have only one meaning, namely, "the *Pravda*-ists are making one conquest after another" (this is an objective, verifiable fact that may be established by the study of the mass labour movement of Russia even in 1912 and 1913), *but I, Trotsky*, condemn the *Pravda*-ists 1) as splitters and 2) as suicidal politicians.

Let us consider all this.

First of all, let us thank Trotsky. Recently (between August 1912 and February 1914) he followed in the footsteps of F. Dan, who, as is known, threatened and called for the "*killing*" of anti-liquidationism. *Now* Trotsky does not threaten to "kill" our ten-

dency (and our Party—don't get angry, citizen Trotsky, surely this is true!); he only prophesies that it will kill *itself*.

This is much milder, is it not? This is almost "non-factional," is it not?

But jokes aside (although a joke is the only way of responding mildly to Trotsky's intolerable phrasemongering).

"Suicide" is merely a phrase, an empty phrase, it is just "Trotskyism."

Schism is a serious political accusation. This accusation is being repeated against us in thousands of ways both by the liquidators and by all those above-mentioned groups which from the standpoint of Paris and Vienna undoubtedly exist.

And they all repeat this serious political accusation in a remarkably unserious manner. Look at Trotsky. He admits that "schism" is making (read—the *Pravda*-ists are making) one suicidal conquest after another. He adds to this:

*"Numerous advanced workers who are in a state of utter political perplexity themselves often become the active agents of schism."* (No. 1, p. 6.)

Is it possible to find examples of a more unserious attitude towards the question than the one which is revealed in these words?

You accuse us of schism, whereas we see in front of us, in the arena of the labour movement in Russia, absolutely nothing but liquidationism. Does that mean that you consider our attitude towards liquidationism to be incorrect? Indeed, *all* the groups abroad, enumerated above, however strongly they may differ from one another, agree that our attitude towards liquidationism is wrong and "schismatic." This also establishes a similarity (and a substantial political *rapprochement*) between *all* these groups and the liquidators.

If our attitude towards liquidationism is wrong in theory and principle, then Trotsky should have said *plainly*, should have declared *definitely*, should have indicated unequivocally wherein he found it to be wrong. Trotsky, however, has *for years* avoided that essential point.

If our attitude towards liquidationism is refuted in practice

by the experience of the movement, this experience should be analysed, and this again Trotsky fails to do. He admits: "Numerous advanced workers . . . become *the active agents* of schism" (read—active agents of the *Pravda*-ist line, tactics, system, organisation).

Why is this regrettable development taking place, a development which, as Trotsky confesses, is confirmed by experience: that the *advanced* workers, and *numerous* workers at that, are supporting *Pravda*?

Trotsky answers—owing to the state of "utter political perplexity" of these advanced workers.

This explanation is no doubt extremely flattering to Trotsky, to all the five factions abroad, and to the liquidators. Trotsky is very fond of explaining historical events "with the learned mien of an expert," in pompous and sonorous phrases, in a manner flattering to Trotsky. If "numerous advanced workers" become "active agents" of the political and Party line, which does not harmonise with the line of Trotsky, then Trotsky settles the question unceremoniously, directly and immediately: these advanced workers are "in a state of utter political perplexity," and he, Trotsky, is obviously "in a state" of political firmness, clarity and correctness regarding the line! . . . And this very same Trotsky, beating his chest, thunders against factionalism, against narrow circles, and against the intelligentsia foisting their will on the workers! . . .

Really, reading such things we involuntarily ask ourselves whether these voices emanate from a lunatic asylum.

The question of liquidationism and of condemning it has been placed before the "advanced workers" by the Party since 1903.<sup>1</sup> and the question of a split with the precisely defined group of liquidators (namely—the *Nasha Zurya* group), i.e., the question of the impossibility of building up the Party otherwise than *without* that group and in opposition to it—this latter question was raised in January 1912, more than two years ago. The advanced workers, by an overwhelming majority, declared themselves pre-

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the December All-Russian Conference of 1908. See "Liquidationism and the Group of Liquidators," pp. 151-52 *Ed Eng ed.*

cisely *in favour* of supporting the "January (1912) line."<sup>1</sup> Trotsky himself admitted this fact when he spoke about "conquests" and "numerous advanced workers." And Trotsky dismisses the matter simply by *abusing* these advanced workers as "splitters" and "politically perplexed"!

People who have not taken leave of their senses will draw a different conclusion from these facts. Where the *majority* of class conscious workers have rallied to precise and definite decisions, there is *unity* of opinion and action, there is Party spirit and a Party.

Perplexity and *schism* reign precisely where we saw liquidators, "removed from their posts" by workers, or among half a dozen groups abroad, which for two years have produced *no* proof of their being connected with the mass labour movement in Russia. Now by trying to persuade the workers *not to carry out the decisions* of that "whole" which is recognised by the Marxists-*Pravda*-ists, Trotsky *is trying* to disrupt the movement and cause a split.

These attempts are impotent, but it is necessary to expose the leaders of the small groups of the intelligentsia who have gone too far in their conceit and who, while themselves causing a split, shout about a split, who after two or more years, having suffered *complete defeat* in the eyes of the advanced workers, *split* with incredible insolence upon the decisions and the will of these advanced workers and call them "politically perplexed." Surely these are entirely the methods of Nozdrev, or Yudushka Golovlev.

And in our capacity as publicists we shall never tire of repeating the *precise*, unrefuted and irrefutable data in answer to the repeated shouts about a split. In the Second Duma 47 per cent of the workers' electoral college<sup>2</sup> consisted of Bolshevik deputies, in

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the January (Prague) All-Russian Conference of 1912. See present volume, pp. 149-54.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The elections to the Duma were indirect; the electors were divided into different categories, or *curiæ*, according to property qualifications, each category voting separately. Factory workers were in a separate category. The electors in each category voted, not directly for the candidate, but for "electors," who, in turn, met together as an electoral college in each *gubernia* to elect the member of the Duma.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

the Third Duma their proportion rose to 50 per cent, in the Fourth Duma to 67 per cent.

Here you have the majority of the "advanced workers," here you have the Party, here you have the unity of opinion and action of the majority of class conscious workers.

The liquidators say in reply (see Bulkin and L. M. in *Nasha Zarya*, No. 3) that we are using arguments based on Stolypin's electoral colleges. This objection is unreasonable and dishonest. The Germans measure their successes at the polls in accordance with the Bismarck electoral law, which disfranchises women. Only lunatics could reproach the German Marxists for measuring their successes under *the given* electoral law, although they do not in any way justify its reactionary restrictions.

It is the same in our case: without defending the electoral colleges, or the electoral college system, we measured our success under *the given* electoral law. Electoral colleges existed under all three Dumas (Second, Third and Fourth); it is *within* one and the same workers' electoral college, *within* Social-Democracy that a *complete* change has set in against the liquidators. Whoever does not want to deceive himself and others must recognise this objective fact of the victory of *labour unity* as *against* the liquidators.

The other objection is just as "intelligent": both the Mensheviks and the liquidators voted for (and took part in the election of) such and such Bolsheviks. Excellent! And does this not hold good in respect of the 53 per cent of the *non-Bolshevik* deputies in the Second Duma, of the 50 per cent in the Third Duma and the 33 per cent in the Fourth Duma?

If the figures of the workers' electors or representatives were available instead of the figures of the deputies we would gladly have taken them; but such more detailed figures are *not* available and so the "objectors" are simply throwing dust in the eyes of the public.

What about the figures of the workers' groups which assisted the newspapers of various tendencies? During the *two* years (1912 and 1913) 2,801 groups were in favour of *Pravda* and 740 in favour



of *Luch*.<sup>1</sup> Anyone can verify these figures and no one has attempted to refute them.

Where then is the *unity of action and the will of the majority* of the "advanced workers," and where is the *violation* of the will of the majority?

Trotsky's "non-factionalism" is schism, in the sense that it is a most impudent violation of the will of the majority of the workers.

### III. COLLAPSE OF THE AUGUST "BLOC"

But there is another, very important method of verifying the correctness and truthfulness of the charge of schism hurled by Trotsky.

You believe it is precisely the "Leninists" who are the splitters? Very well, let us assume that you are right.

But if you are right, why did not all the other factions and groups prove that unity with the liquidators was possible *without* the "Leninists" and *against* the "splitters"? If we are splitters, why did not you, the uniters, unite with each other and with the liquidators? Had you done so, you would have proved to the workers *in deeds* that unity was possible and beneficial.

Let us recall events in their chronological order.

In January 1912 the "splitters," "Leninists," declare that they are a party *without* the liquidators and *against* them.

In March 1912 *all* the groups and "factions"—the liquidators, the Trotskyists, the *Vperyod*-ists, the "Party Bolsheviks," the "Party Mensheviks"—*combine* against these "splitters" in their Russian leaflets and in the columns of the German Social-Democratic newspaper *Vorwärts*. All of them, harmoniously, unanimously, in an agreed and identical fashion, call us "usurpers," "mystifiers" and other no less tender and endearing nicknames.

Very well, gentlemen! But what could have been easier for you than to *combine against* the "usurpers" and give the "advanced workers" an example of *unity*? Had the advanced workers seen, on the one side, the unity of all against the usurpers, the unity of

<sup>1</sup> The preliminary statistics up to April 14 [1], 1914, gave 4,000 groups in favour of *Pravda* (from January 14 [1], 1912) and 1,000 for the liquidators and all their allies.

both the liquidators and the *non*-liquidators, and on the other side, *only* "usurpers," "splitters," etc., would they not have supported the former?

If the differences are only invented or exaggerated, etc., by the "Leninists," and the unity of liquidators, Plekhanovists, *Vperyodists* and Trotskyists, etc., is indeed *possible*, then why have you not proved this by *your own* example during these two years?

In August 1912, the conference of the "uniters" met. Discord set in at once: the Plekhanovists refused to come, the *Vperyodists* came, but left with a protest and exposed the fictitiousness of the entire venture.

"Unity" was effected between the liquidators, Letts, Trotskyists (Trotsky and Semkovsky), the Caucasians and the "seven."<sup>1</sup> But did they unite? We declared at the time that they did not, that it was only a cover for liquidationism. Have events refuted our assertion?

Exactly a year and a half later, in February 1914, it turned out:

- 1) That the "seven" was falling to pieces—Buryanov left it;
- 2) That of the remaining "six," Chkheidze and Tulyakov or someone else could not agree on the answer to be given to Plekhanov. They had announced in the press that they would answer him; *but they could not give that answer*;
- 3) That Trotsky, who in fact had disappeared from *Luch* many months before that, *refused to co-operate* and published "his own" magazine *Borba*. By calling his magazine "non-factional" Trotsky clearly implies by it (clearly to all who are in any way familiar with the matter) that in his, Trotsky's, opinion, *Nasha Zarya* and *Luch* have turned out to be "factional," i.e., bad uniters.

My dear Trotsky, if you are a uniter, if you say that unity with the liquidators is possible, if you, in common with them, take your stand on the "basic ideas formulated in August 1912" (*Borba*,

<sup>1</sup> The Menshevik fraction in the Fourth Imperial Duma. About the split of the Social-Democratic fraction in that Duma into two independent fractions—the Menshevik "seven" and the Bolshevik "six"—*Ed. Eng ed.*

No. 1, p. 6, editorial), then why did you yourself not unite with the liquidators of *Nasha Zarya* and of *Luch*?

When, even before the publication of Trotsky's magazine, a biting article appeared in *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta* on the "unclear" political complexion of the magazine and on the fact that "quite a great deal was being said" about it "in Marxian circles," *Put Pravdy*<sup>1</sup> (No. 37) naturally had to expose the untruth: "in Marxian circles they spoke" about a secret memorandum written by Trotsky *against* the *Luch*-ists; Trotsky's political complexion and his secession from the August *bloc* is now quite "clear."

4) An, the well-known leader of the Caucasian liquidators who had expressed himself in opposition to L. Sedov (and received a good drubbing for it in public at the hands of F. Dan and Co.), now turns up in *Borba*. It is still "unclear": do the Caucasians now wish to go with Trotsky, or with Dan?

5) The Lettish Marxists, the only genuine organisation in the "August *bloc*," have *formally* left it, having declared (1914) in the resolution of their last congress:

*"The attempt on the part of the conciliators to unite at all costs with the liquidators (the August Conference of 1912) proved futile, and the uniters themselves became ideologically and politically dependent on the liquidators."*

This statement was made, after one and a half years' experience, by the organisation which itself takes a *neutral* position, not wishing to come into contact with *either* of the two centres. All the more weighty, therefore, should this decision of *neutral* people be for Trotsky!

Enough, one would think.

People who accused us of schism, of unwillingness, or inability, to get on with the liquidators, *themselves* could not get on with them. The August *bloc* turned out to be a fiction and collapsed.

In concealing this collapse from his readers, Trotsky is deceiving them.

The experience of our opponents has proved that we were right; it has proved that it is impossible to work with the liquidators.

<sup>1</sup> *The Path of Truth*—Ed Eng ed.

## IV. A CONCILIATOR'S ADVICE TO THE "SEVEN"

The leading article in *Borba*, No. 1, entitled "The Split in the Duma Fraction," contains advice from a conciliator to the seven deputies in the State Duma who are pro-liquidationist (or are wavering towards liquidationism). The essence of the advice is contained in the following sentence:

"...in the first instance to apply to the 'six' in all cases when an agreement with other fractions is necessary...." (P. 29.)

Now, this is sound advice on which Trotsky, by the way, apparently disagrees with the liquidator-*Luch*-ists. The *Pravda*-ists have taken precisely this standpoint ever since the beginning of the struggle of the two fractions in the Duma, since the resolution of the Summer Conference (1913) was passed. The Russian Social-Democratic Labour fraction has repeatedly stated *in the press*, even after the split, that it continued to maintain this position, in spite of the repeated refusals of the "seven."

From the very beginning, ever since the resolution of the Summer Conference was passed, we have thought and still think that *agreements* on questions of *Duma* work are desirable and possible; if such agreements have repeatedly been made with petty-bourgeois peasant democrats (*Trudoviki*), they are, of course, all the more possible and necessary with the petty-bourgeois liberal labour politicians.

We must not exaggerate differences and we must face realities: the "seven" are people who are wavering towards liquidationism, who yesterday whole-heartedly followed Dan, and who now turn their eyes longingly from Dan to Trotsky and back again. The liquidators are a group of legalists who have left the Party and are pursuing a liberal labour policy. In view of their rejection of underground work there can be no question of unity with that group in the matter of Party construction and the labour movement. Whoever thinks otherwise is profoundly mistaken, since he fails to take into account the vastness of the changes that have occurred since 1908.

But *agreements* on particular questions with this group, which

is outside the Party, or near the Party, are of course permissible: we *must* always force this group, as well as the Trudoviki, to choose between the workers' (*Pravda*-ist) policy and the liberal policy. For instance, on the question of the struggle for the freedom of the press, the liquidators clearly betrayed vacillation between the liberal presentation of the question, which denied or forgot the non-censored press, and the opposite, workers' policy.

Within the scope of *Duma* politics, when the most important questions concerning matters *outside the Duma* are not directly raised, agreements with the "seven" liberal labour deputies are possible and desirable. On this point Trotsky passed *from* the liquidators *to* the position of the Party Summer Conference (1913).

One must not forget, however, that, from the point of view of the group which is outside the Party, agreement means something very different from what Party members usually take it to mean. For non-Party people, "agreement" in the Duma is the "*framing* of a tactical resolution or of a policy." For Party people, an agreement is an attempt to *enlist* others for the purpose of carrying out the Party policy.

The Trudoviki, for instance, have no party. By agreement they mean the "free framing" of a policy, so to say: today with the Cadets, tomorrow with the Social-Democrats. We, however, understand an agreement with the Trudoviki to mean something very different: we have Party decisions on all the important questions of tactics, and we shall never recede from these decisions; by coming to an agreement with the Trudoviki we mean *enlisting* them on our side, *convincing* them that we are right, *not refusing* to take part in joint action against the Black Hundreds and against the liberals.

To what extent Trotsky has forgotten (after all, his association with the liquidators has affected him) the elementary difference between agreements from the Party and the non-Party standpoint can be seen from the following argument which he uses:

"The representatives of the International should bring together the two parts into which our parliamentary representative body has split, and jointly with them consider what unites them and what divides them      A detailed

tactical resolution can be framed, formulating the principles of parliamentary tactics. . . ." (No. 1, pp. 29-30.)

This is a characteristic and very typical specimen of the liquidationist presentation of the question! Trotsky's magazine forgets about the Party: and, indeed, is it worth while remembering such a trifle?

When different parties in Europe (Trotsky is fond of talking irrelevantly of Europeanism) come to an agreement, or unite, what happens is this: their representatives come together and ascertain, first of all, the points of difference (precisely what the International placed on the order of the day for Russia, keeping out of the resolution Kautsky's rash allegation that "the old Party no longer exists" ). Having ascertained the points of difference, the representatives indicate *what decisions* (resolutions, conditions, etc.) on the questions of tactics, organisation, etc., *must be submitted to the congresses of both parties*. If they succeed in outlining a draft of joint decisions, the congresses decide whether to accept them; if *different* proposals are outlined, these too are finally discussed by the congresses of both parties.

Only the *European* examples of opportunism, and not the examples of the European Party spirit, have any "attraction" for the liquidators and Trotsky.

The Duma deputies will frame the "detailed tactical resolutions"!! The Russian "advanced workers," with whom Trotsky has good reason to be so dissatisfied, can clearly see from the example given the lengths to which the grouplets in Vienna and in Paris, which persuaded even Kautsky that there was "no Party" in Russia, go in their ridiculous project-mongering. But while people sometimes succeed in deceiving foreigners in this respect, the Russian advanced workers (at the risk of rousing the ire of the formidable Trotsky once more) will simply laugh in the face of these project-mongers.

They will say to them: "Our detailed tactical resolutions are drawn up by Party congresses and conferences (we do not know how you non-Party people do it), for example, those of 1907, 1908, 1910, 1912 and 1913. We shall gladly acquaint the unin-

formed foreigners, and also the forgetful Russians, with our Party decisions and we shall, with still greater pleasure, ask the representatives of the 'seven' or the 'Augustians' or 'Levitsevisists,' or whomever you like, to inform us of the resolutions of their congresses and conferences, to raise at their next congress the definite question of what their attitude is towards our resolutions, or towards the resolution of the neutral Lettish Congress of 1914,<sup>1</sup> etc."

That is what the "advanced workers" of Russia will say to the various project-mongers; that is, for instance, what the organised Marxists of St. Petersburg have *already said* in the Marxian press. It suits Trotsky to ignore these printed conditions for the liquidators. So much the worse for Trotsky. Our duty is to warn the readers against the ridiculousness of "unity" projects (of the "August bloc" type) which do not take into account the will of the majority of the class conscious workers of Russia.

#### V. TROTSKY'S LIQUIDATIONIST VIEWS

In his magazine Trotsky has tried to say as little as possible about the essence of his views. *Put Pravdy* (No. 37) has already pointed out that Trotsky has not uttered a word either on the question of illegal work, or on the slogan of the struggle for an open party, etc. Incidentally, that is why we say in this case, in which a segregated organisation wants to set itself up *without* having an ideological-political complexion, that it is the *worst* sort of factionalism.

But although Trotsky has avoided expounding his views directly, a whole series of passages in his magazine indicate the kind of ideas he is stealthily introducing and concealing.

In the very first editorial in the first number we read:

"Pre-revolutionary Social-Democracy was a *workers'* party in its ideas and in its aims only. In reality it was an organisation of the Marxian intelligentsia, which led the awakening working class...." (P. 5.)

This is an old liberal and liquidationist ditty, which serves, in fact, as an introduction to the *renunciation* of the Party. This ditty

<sup>1</sup> See above, in this article, p. 199.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

is based on a distortion of historical facts. The strikes of 1895 and 1896 had already created a *mass* labour movement, which was connected, both ideologically and organisationally, with Social-Democracy. And it was to these strikes, to the economic and non-economic agitation, that "the intelligentsia . . . led the . . . working class"!!?

Or take the precise statistics on political offences for the period of 1901-03 as compared with the preceding period:

OCCUPATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE LIBERATION MOVEMENT  
PROSECUTED FOR POLITICAL OFFENCES (*in percentage*)

<i>Periods</i>	<i>Agriculture</i>	<i>Trade and Industry</i>	<i>Liberal Professions and Students</i>	<i>No Definite Occupation, or No Occupation</i>
1884-90 . . . . .	7.1	15.1	53.3	19.9
1901-03 . . . . .	9.0	46.1	28.7	8.0

We see that in the 'eighties, when there was as yet *no* Social-Democratic Party in Russia, when the movement was "Narodnik," the intelligentsia preponderated: it supplied more than half the participants.

The picture changed completely in 1901-03 when there was already a Social-Democratic Party, when the old *Iskra* was conducting its work. The intelligentsia then constituted the *minority* among the participants in the movement, the *workers* ("trade and industry") were far more numerous than the intelligentsia, and workers and peasants taken together constituted more than half the total.

It is in the very struggle of tendencies within Marxism that the petty-bourgeois intellectual *wing* of Social-Democracy revealed itself, beginning with "Economism" (1895-1903) and continuing as "Menshevism" (1903-08) and "liquidationism" (1908-14).

Trotsky repeats the liquidationist libels upon the Party, but he fears to touch the twenty years' history of the struggle of tendencies within the Party.

Here is another example:

"In its attitude towards parliamentarism Russian Social-Democracy passed through the same three stages" (as in other countries) "...first 'boycottism'... then the recognition in principle of parliamentary tactics, but" (a magnificent "but," that same "but" that Shchedrin translated by the



phrase: ears do not grow higher than the forehead, they never do!)  
 " ... for purely agitational purposes ... and finally the urgent demands are transferred to the Duma tribune ..." (No 1, p 34)

This is another liquidationist distortion of history. The difference between the second and third stages is invented in order to smuggle in a defence of reformism and opportunism. Boycottism as a stage in the "attitude of Social-Democracy towards parliamentarism" existed *neither* in Europe (there was anarchism there, and still is) *nor* in Russia where the boycott, for instance, of the Bulygin Duma<sup>1</sup> affected *only* a definite institution, was *never* connected with "parliamentarism" and was called forth by the peculiar struggle between liberalism and Marxism for the continuation of the attack. Trotsky does not so much as stammer a word on how this struggle affected the struggle between the two tendencies in Marxism.

When we refer to history we must explain concrete questions and the class roots of the various trends; whoever wants in a Marxian way to study the struggle of classes and the struggle of trends that was waged around the question of participating in the Bulygin Duma will find there the roots of the liberal labour policy. But Trotsky "refers" to history in order to *avoid* the concrete questions and to *invent* a justification, or a semblance of a justification, for the present-day opportunists!

He writes:

"Practically all the tendencies apply the same methods of struggle and construction." "The cries about a liberal danger in our labour movement are simply a coarse sectarian caricature of reality." (No. 1, pp. 5 and 35.)

This is a very obvious, and a very angry defence of the liquidators. But we shall take the liberty of selecting just one small fact, one of the latest ones—Trotsky only hurls phrases; we would like the workers themselves to ponder over the fact.

The fact is that *Severnaya Rabochaya Gazeta* in its issue of March 26 [13] wrote:

*"Instead of emphasising the definite concrete task confronting the working class, i.e., that of forcing the Duma to reject the bill (on the press)—"*

<sup>1</sup> See Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, "The Boycott of the Bulygin Duma and the Insurrection"—*Ed Eng ed.*

*a vague formula is advanced of fighting for 'uncurtailed slogans,' and at the same time an advertising campaign for the illegal press is conducted, which can only weaken the workers' struggle for their legal press."*

Here you have a documentary, clear and definite defence of the liquidationist policy and a criticism of the *Pravda*-ist policy. Well, will any literate person say that both tendencies apply "the same methods of struggle and construction" to the given question? Will any literate person say that the liquidators are *not* here pursuing a *liberal* labour policy? or that the liberal danger in the labour movement has been invented?

Trotsky avoids facts and concrete indications just because they mercilessly refute all his angry exclamations and pompous phrases. It is of course very easy to assume a proud pose and say: "coarse sectarian caricature." It is equally easy to add more slashing and pompous catchwords about "emancipation from conservative factionalism."

But is this not too cheap? Is this not a weapon taken from the arsenal of the period when Trotsky was dazzling the schoolboys?

The "advanced workers," with whom Trotsky is angry, would nevertheless like to be told plainly and clearly: do you approve of that "method of struggle and construction" which is expressed in the above-quoted evaluation of a concrete political campaign? Yes or no? If yes, then this is a liberal labour policy, it is treachery to Marxism and the Party, and to talk of "peace" and "unity" with *such* a policy, with groups pursuing *such* a policy, is deceiving oneself and others.

If no, then say so plainly. But you will not astonish, satisfy or terrify the present-day worker with phrases.

By the way, the policy preached by the liquidators in the above quotation is stupid even from a liberal standpoint, because the passing of a law in the Duma depends on the "Zemstvo-Octobrists" of the Benningsen type, who exposed their cards in the commission.

\* \* \*

The old participants in the Marxian movement in Russia know Trotsky's personality very well, and it is not worth while talking to them about it. But the young generation of workers do not know him and we must speak of him, for he is typical of all the five

grouplets abroad, which in fact are also vacillating between the liquidators and the Party.

During the period of the old *Iskra* (1901-03) these waverers who deserted from the "Economists" to the *Iskra*-ists and back again were dubbed "Tushino deserters." (Such was the name given during the "disturbed times"<sup>1</sup> in old Russ to warriors deserting one camp for another.)

When we talk of liquidationism we speak of a definite ideological trend, which has been growing for years, whose roots throughout the twenty years' history of Marxism are bound up with "Menshevism" and "Economism," with the policy and the ideology of a definite class—the liberal bourgeoisie.

The "Tushino deserters" declare themselves to be above factions for the simple reason that they "borrow" ideas from one faction one day and from another faction another day. Trotsky was an ardent *Iskra*-ist in 1901-03, and Ryazanov described the part he played at the Congress of 1903 as that of "Lenin's truncheon." At the end of 1903 Trotsky was an ardent Menshevik, *i.e.*, one who deserted the *Iskra*-ists for the "Economists"; he proclaimed that "there is a deep gulf between the old and the new *Iskra*." In 1904-05 he left the Mensheviks and began to vacillate, at one moment collaborating with Martynov (the "Economist"), and at another proclaiming the absurdly "Left" theory of "permanent revolution."<sup>2</sup> In 1906-07 he drew nearer to the Bolsheviks, and in the spring of 1907 he declared his solidarity with Rosa Luxemburg.

During the period of disintegration, after long "non-factional"

<sup>1</sup> The *interregnum* early in the seventeenth century before the election of the Romanovs to the throne of Russia in 1613.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The theory that, having captured political power, the Russian proletariat would have to make inroads on the private property of the peasantry. This would rouse the peasantry against the proletarian state, so that the latter could not be victorious unless it received the state aid of the proletariat of other countries, that is to say, unless the proletarian revolution took place in other countries. Trotsky thus displayed lack of faith in the revolutionary potentialities of the peasantry. After the October Revolution this theory led to his denial of the possibility of building socialism in a single country and to his desertion to the camp of the counter-revolution.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

vacillations, he again shifted to the Right, and in August 1912 entered into a *bloc* with the liquidators. Now he is again abandoning them, repeating, however, what *in essence* are their pet ideas.

Such types are characteristic as fragments of the historical formations of yesterday, when the mass labour movement of Russia was still dormant and every grouplet was "free" to represent itself as a tendency, group, faction, in a word a "great power" talking of uniting with others.

The young generation of workers must know very well with whom it has to deal, when incredible pretensions are made by people who absolutely do not want to consider *either* the Party decisions, which since 1908 have determined and defined the attitude to be adopted towards liquidationism, *or* the experience of the present-day labour movement in Russia, which has in fact created the *unity* of the majority on the basis of the full recognition of the above-mentioned decisions.

May 1914.

## A GOOD RESOLUTION AND A BAD SPEECH

ALL class conscious workers in Russia have undoubtedly read the resolution on Russian affairs adopted by the International Bureau<sup>1</sup> with interest and attention. The gist of this resolution, as is known, is the decision to organise or arrange "*a general exchange of opinion*" between "all factions in the labour movement" in Russia, both those recognising the Social-Democratic programme and those whose programme "is in agreement" (or "in accord"—*im Einklange*) with it.

The last-named definition is exceedingly broad, for it includes not only the followers of Yagello, but every group that chooses to declare that its programme is "in accord" or "in agreement" with the programme of the Social-Democrats. However, this broad definition does no harm, because for the purposes of an "*exchange of opinion*" it is, of course, desirable to define the composition of the participants on a broader scale, not excluding those with whom even separate groups of Social-Democrats *would like* to unite. It is necessary to bear in mind that at the meeting of the International Socialist Bureau two plans were proposed: 1) Kautsky's plan—"to arrange a general exchange of opinion" and *nothing else*. An exchange of opinion before an impartial body, namely, the Executive Committee of the International Socialist Bureau, would *elucidate* the state of affairs and reveal how deep are the differences of opinion. 2) The other plan was proposed by Rosa Luxemburg but was withdrawn by her after Kautsky's objections; according to that plan, a "unity conference" (*Einigungskonferenz*) was proposed "in order to restore a united party."

Of course, this last plan was worse, because it was necessary first of all to collect precise data, to say nothing of the fact that it was only an attempt on the part of Rosa Luxemburg to smuggle in the "restoration" of the sadly notorious "Tyszko circle."

<sup>1</sup> The International Bureau of the Second International.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

Kautsky's plan was accepted; it was the more cautious, the more systematic plan, which approached the question of unity *by means of* a preliminary "exchange of opinion" and the investigation of precise data. Quite naturally, therefore, Kautsky's resolution was passed unanimously.

But it is necessary to distinguish Kautsky's resolution, which was adopted as the resolution of the Bureau, from the speech delivered by Kautsky, who on one point said *monstrous* things. We have already briefly referred to this circumstance, and now the report of Kautsky's speech in *Vorwärts* (the principal German organ) forces us to dwell at greater length on this important question.

In opposing Rosa Luxemburg, Kautsky said that "the old Party has disappeared, although the old names have been preserved: in the course of time" (*im Laufe der Jahre*), in the last few years, "these names have acquired a new content. Old comrades should not be summarily expelled simply because their party" (*ihre Partei*) "does not bear the old name."

In reply to this Rosa Luxemburg said that "Kautsky's remark, alleging that the Russian Party is dead" (*sei tot*), "is a rash phrase," and Kautsky confined himself to a "protest against the imputation that he had stated that Russian Social-Democracy was dead. He only said that the old forms were disrupted, and that it was necessary to establish a new form."

The above is the translation of the passages referring to our question in the official report.

It is obvious that Kautsky did not say and could not say that *Social-Democracy* was dead. But he *did* say that the Party had disappeared and he *did not withdraw* that in spite of the objection that was raised.

It is incredible, yet it is a fact.

The confusion displayed by Kautsky is unbelievably great. To the expulsion of *which* "old comrades" did he refer? Messrs. Potresov and Co.? Was it liquidationist amorphousness that he described as "*their party*"?

Or did Kautsky have in mind the "*levitsa* of the Polish Socialist Party," which Rosa Luxemburg's formula excluded? But if that is

the case, then the expression "old comrades" is unintelligible, for *never*, from the very beginning of the existence of the Social-Democratic Party, *i.e.*, since 1898, have the members of the Polish Socialist Party been Party comrades of the Social-Democrats *at all*!

For us, both interpretations mean the same thing; for it is really ridiculous in an "exchange of opinions" on the question of unity to exclude the liquidators (surely the whole question turns about them), as it would be ridiculous to exclude the *levitsa* of the Polish Socialist Party (it is possible, speaking in the abstract, that the liquidators—anything may be expected from them—are capable of defending, in the form of an ultimatum, their schismatic *bloc* with a *non*-Social-Democratic Party—the Polish Socialist Party). We must in any case know exactly not only what Messieurs the liquidators want from the Party but also what their allies want.

The indisputable fact remains that at the meeting of the Bureau Kautsky went so far as to allege that the Russian Party had disappeared.

How could he come to utter such a monstrous thing? In order to understand this the Russian workers must know *who is informing* the German Social-Democratic press on Russian affairs. When the Germans write they usually avoid the question of differences. When Russians write in the German Social-Democratic publications, we see either an alliance of all the grouplets abroad with the liquidators for the purpose of heaping the most indecent abuse upon the "Leninists" (such was the case in *Vorwärts* in the spring of 1912), or the writings of a Tyszkowski, Trotskyist or some other person belonging to a circle abroad who deliberately confuses the question. *For years* there has not been a single document, no collection of resolutions, no analysis of ideas, not a single attempt to collect factual data!

Let us pity the German leaders who (knowing how to collect and study data when engaged on theory) are not ashamed to listen to and repeat the tales of the liquidationist informants.

It is the *resolution* of the Bureau that will be applied in actual life, and Kautsky's speech will remain a sad curiosity.

December 1913.

## ONCE MORE ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST BUREAU AND THE LIQUIDATORS

THE distinguishing feature of the publicists of the *New Liquidationist Newspaper*,<sup>1</sup> viz., 'hypocrisy, stimulated by impotent malice, has never before reached such limits as it has in their articles on the decision of the International Bureau.

The lengths they have gone to is obvious from the fact that, after their very first articles on this subject, the Secretary of the International Socialist Bureau, Huysmans, was obliged to authorise Comrade Popov to transmit to the Russian workers his protest against the attempts made by *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta* to "exploit, in their factional interests, the lack of information" of the Russian readers, his protest against the "absolute incorrectness and disloyalty" of the news printed by the liquidators concerning the decisions of the Bureau.

Since the publicists of *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta* have received such a resounding . . . characterisation from the Secretary of the Bureau, we can calmly ignore their attempts to accuse *us* of distorting the true character of the decisions passed in London. Persons publicly denounced by the Secretary of the Bureau for "exploiting" the decisions of the Bureau "in their factional interests" and for their "disloyal" attitude towards these decisions may shout as much as they please about their respect for the International, etc., but they will scarcely be believed by anyone. Every worker knows now the real name for the manipulations by which Mr. Dan contrives with great effort to find, in the resolutions of the Bureau, "the methods of construction" of the Party, the "condemnation" of the "six," the "rejection" of our "claim" and the

<sup>1</sup> *Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta* [*New Labour Gazette*]. - Ed.



"recognition" of the Social-Democratic character of the *levitsa*. Literary juggling with the resolutions of the Bureau is not a sign of respect for these resolutions, Mr. Dan!

How great is the confusion of these jugglers, however! See how they are forced to refute their own statements at every step!

1) In No. 102, Mr. Dan solemnly announced: "The International Socialist Bureau *condemned* the desertion of the fraction by the six deputies." In the next issue but one, in No. 104, another juggler, Mr. L. Sedov, declared not less solemnly: "The International Socialist Bureau issued neither testimonials nor condemnations." And—note!—both worthies are highly satisfied with the decisions of the Bureau: one because it "condemned" and the other because it did not condemn! Can one imagine a picture of greater confusion?

And Messieurs the liquidators had good reason to be confused! The basic point of the resolution of the Bureau states unambiguously: "*Any practical step towards unity must be preceded by a preliminary elucidation of the existing differences.*"

And this decision is perfectly correct.

If we do not wish to present a shapeless confusion of the most diverse elements to the working class under the name of "unity," if we want real unity in the *work*, then the first obligatory step in this direction must be the precise elucidation of the "points of difference." Let the "points of difference" be clearly elucidated with the aid of a "general exchange of opinion," and then it will become clear whether it is possible to talk about any practical steps towards unity. That is the way the question is presented in the resolution of the Bureau. We heartily welcome this presentation of the question. We responded to the proposal of the International Socialist Bureau by calling upon the workers to discuss the differences once more, calmly and thoughtfully; and to express their views on the points of difference. We on our part promised to do all we could to help the foreign comrades to become acquainted with the existing differences. The resolution printed in *Proletarskaya Pravda*, No. 9, quite correctly enumerates the

propositions on which we and the liquidators differ. Such had to be our reply to the proposal of the Bureau, and of course those who treat the decision of the Bureau to bring about a "general exchange of opinion concerning points of differences" seriously could not act otherwise.

But—and here is the rub—there is nothing more disagreeable, undesirable, unacceptable for Messieurs the liquidators than the elucidation of the prevailing theoretical, programme, tactical and organisational differences. The purpose of all their juggling, distortions and abuse in connection with the resolution of the Bureau is exclusively to hush up this demand of the resolution for a preliminary elucidation of differences. Both Mr. L. Sedov and Mr. Dan are most assiduously trying to forestall events: would it not be possible to "unite" without "referring" to the ideological "service record" of those uniting? Would it not be possible to dispense with "quotations from old magazines and newspapers"?—Mr. L. Sedov asks, greatly perturbed. Can we not leave off recalling the "past"?—pleads Mr. Dan. We understand them very well: there is nothing pleasant for Mr. L. Sedov in recalling the articles on illegal work (*Luch*, No. [101] 15), or for Mr. Dan in recalling the slogan of "the struggle for legality." And we fully endorse the decision of the Bureau in so far as it proposes not to dig up the errors of the past. We shall not refuse to grant an amnesty for the "errors of the past," that amnesty for which Messieurs the liquidators are petitioning. The past, as such, does not interest us, we are interested in the work of today and of tomorrow. And concerning this work we want to know: whether the baiting of underground activities will be *continued* in the liquidationist press, whether they will persist in arguing that the "three whales" are unsuitable at the present time; whether they will continue to defend the distortion of the programme by the "Augustians," etc.

The elucidation of these questions and of the degree of difference with regard to them is, according to the resolution of the Bureau, the *preliminary* condition for any step forward in the matter of unity—unless we understand "unity" in the liquidationist sense, *i.e.*,

throwing into one heap all those who have taken it into their heads to call themselves Social-Democrats irrespective of the ideas they hold.

"The counts of the indictment have already been drawn up," thunders Mr. L. Sedov. We should not like to recall here the proverb about the man whose hat burns,<sup>1</sup> but why does Mr. Sedov take ordinary peace terms to be an indictment? We say: that organisation which would be formed as a result of unity should take its stand on such and such principles—the recognition of the old programme, a certain form of organisation, uncurtailed slogans, resolute tactics, etc. And you immediately declare that this formulation of the programme, of the tactics and the tasks of the organisation, is nothing but a "complete list of liquidationist sins." We are very sorry for you, but neither we nor the Bureau know of any other method of building new organisations than by elucidating their programme, their tactics, etc.

However, we are guilty of a still more grievous sin. Not only have we advanced the conditions for the creation of an organisation, *i.e.*, not only have we elucidated the conditions of peace, but we have, in addition, submitted these conditions to the judgment of the workers.

We insist that there is no other way of carrying out the decision of the Bureau than the one we have chosen.

The Bureau calls upon *all those* who profess to be Social-Democrats to elucidate the differences that separate them, as a preliminary step to the solution of the problem of unity.

The resolution which we have printed responded to the appeal of the Bureau by a "list" of views on the basic questions of the programme, tactics and organisation and by submitting our list to the comrade workers for their consideration. Had Messieurs the liquidators followed our example, we would have had, in the more or less near future, clearly formulated opinions of all parties and precise information as to which side is supported by the majority of the organised workers. The task set before the Russian proletariat by the International Socialist Bureau would have been brought

<sup>1</sup> The proverb is: "The thief's hat burns," which means: a guilty mind is never at ease.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

nearer fulfilment. But the liquidators, of course, will continue to the end to avoid that path, for the simple reason that a precise formulation of their political views as well as a submission of these views to the tribunal of the broad masses of the workers are equally disadvantageous to the interests of their circle.

Under these conditions they will inevitably strive to substitute for the definite "elucidation of differences," demanded by the Bureau, the petty personal squabbles, distortions, wilful misrepresentations, which can only hamper its work, and they will always call forth those lessons in "loyalty" which the Secretary of the International was once forced to teach Messieurs the liquidators.

January 1914 [December 1913]

### PART III

#### THE AGRARIAN-PEASANT QUESTION IN THE YEARS OF REACTION AND OF THE NEW REVIVAL (1908-1914)



## LETTER TO I. I. SKVORTSOV-STEPANOV

December 29 [16], 1909.

DEAR COLLEAGUE!

I have received your answer and am writing to continue our discussion.

You *want* to shift the question more to the theoretical (not tactical) ground. I agree. I shall only remind you that *your* point of departure was a tactical one: certainly you rejected the "classical presentation" of the basic tactical proposition. You indicated this tactical solution (without drawing the final tactical *conclusions* from it) in connection with the rejection of the "American possibility." Therefore I do not consider the following statement of yours concerning our differences to be correct; you say: "You" (*i.e.*, I) "emphasise the existence of a movement of the *peasantry*. I recognise the existence of a movement of the peasantry that is becoming *proletarianised*." But this is not the point of difference. Of course I do not deny that the peasantry is becoming proletarianised. The point of difference is whether the bourgeois agrarian system has taken root in Russia to such an extent as to make a sharp transition from the "Prussian" development of agrarian capitalism to the "American" development of agrarian capitalism objectively impossible. If it has, the "classical" presentation of the basic question of tactics falls to the ground. If not—it is preserved.

I maintain that it must be preserved. I do not deny the possibility of the "Prussian" path. I admit that a Marxist must not "vouch" for *either* of these ways, he must not *bind himself down* to one of them *only*; I admit that Stolypin's policy is *another* step along the "Prussian" path and that at a certain stage along that

path a dialectical change *may* set in which would abolish all hopes and prospects for an "American" path. But I assert that *at the present time* this change has *certainly* not yet come and that, therefore, it is absolutely inadmissible for a Marxist, absolutely wrong theoretically, to renounce the "classical" presentation of the question. That is where we differ.

Theoretically these differences reduce themselves to two points, if I am not mistaken: 1) I must destroy your "ally," V. Ilyin, in order to justify my position. In other words, this position contradicts the results of the Marxian analysis of the pre-revolutionary economics of Russia. 2) The "classical" presentation may and must be opposed to the agrarian opportunism of the revisionists (David and Co.), for there is no substantial, radical difference in principle between the presentation of the question of the workers' attitude towards the "muzhik" in Russia and in Germany.

I consider both these propositions to be radically wrong. *Ad*<sup>1</sup> 1) in order not to refer to "tactics" I shall waive Martynov's raid on Ilyin and take up only your presentation of the theoretical question.

What did Ilyin argue and prove? First: that the development of the agrarian relations in Russia is proceeding on capitalist lines *both* in landlord *and* in peasant economy, *both* in the "commune" *and* outside it. Second: that this development has already *irrevocably* determined that there will be *no* other path than the capitalist path, *no* other grouping of classes than the capitalist grouping.

This was the subject of the dispute with the Narodniki. This had to be proved. It was proved. It remains proved. At the present time *another*, a further question is raised (and *was raised* by the movement of 1905-07), which *presupposes* that the problem was solved, solved by Ilyin (and of course not by him alone), but one which presupposes *not* only this, but something bigger, more complex, something *new*. *Apart* from the problem, which was finally and correctly solved in 1883-85, in 1895-99, the history of Rus-

<sup>1</sup> With regard to.--*Ed.*



sia in the twentieth century has confronted us with *another* problem, and theoretically there is nothing more erroneous than to recede from it, dismiss it, or waive it aside by a reference to what has already been solved. To do so would mean reducing problems of the second, *i.e.*, higher, order to problems of a lower, the first order. We cannot adhere to the *general* solution of the problem of capitalism when *new* events (and events that are of world-historic importance such as those of 1905-07) have raised a more concrete problem in a more detailed fashion, the problem of the struggle between the *two* paths, or methods, of *capitalist* agrarian development. When we were fighting against the Narodniki to prove that this path was inevitably and irrevocably a capitalist one, we were quite right and we could not *but* concentrate our entire strength, our entire attention on the question: either capitalism *or* "people's production." This was at once natural, inevitable and legitimate. Now, however, this question has been *answered* both in theory and in practice (for the petty-bourgeois character of the Trudoviki *en masse* has been proved by recent Russian history), and another, a higher question is on the order of the day: capitalism of type  $\alpha$  or capitalism of type  $\beta$ . And, in my humble opinion, Ilyin was right when, in the preface to the second edition of his book, he pointed out that from it logically follows the possibility of *two* types of capitalist, agrarian development, and that the historical struggle between *these types* has not yet come to an end.

The peculiar feature of Russian opportunism in Marxism, *i.e.*, Menshevism, in our time is that it is associated with a doctrinaire simplification, vulgarisation, distortion of the literal meaning of Marxism, a betrayal of its spirit (such was the case with *Rabocheye Dyelo* and Struve). While fighting Narodism as a wrong doctrine of *socialism*, the Mensheviks, in a doctrinaire fashion, overlooked, missed the historically real and progressive historical *content* of Narodism as a theory of the mass '*petty-bourgeois* struggle of democratic capitalism against liberal landlord capitalism, of "American" capitalism versus "Prussian" capitalism. Hence their monstrous, idiotic, renegade idea (which has also thoroughly permeated *Obshchestvennoye Dvizheniye*) that the

peasant *movement* is reactionary, that a Cadet is more progressive than a Trudovik, that the "dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" (the classical presentation) *contradicts* "the entire course of economic development." (P. 661 of the Menshevik *Obshchestvennoye Dvizheniye*.) "Contradicts the entire course of economic development"—is this not reactionary?

I maintain that the struggle against this monstrous distortion of Marxism was the basis of the "classical presentation" and a *correct* basis, although unfortunately, owing to the natural conditions of the time, this struggle was very zealously conducted in the domain of tactics, and not zealously enough in the domain of theory. "Unfortunately," though, is not the right word here and should be struck out!

This agrarian question is *now* the *national* question of the bourgeois development in Russia, and in order to prevent the mistaken (and mechanical) application of the German model, which in many respects is correct and in all respects very valuable, to our conditions, we must clearly understand that the national question of the definitely established bourgeois development of Germany was unification, etc., and not the agrarian question; whereas the *national* question of the final consolidation of bourgeois development in Russia is *precisely* the agrarian (and now even the peasant) question.

Such is the purely theoretical basis of the *difference in application* of Marxism in Germany in approximately 1848-68 and in Russia in 1905-19??

How can I prove that in our country the *agrarian* question, and no other, has assumed national significance for bourgeois development? I do not think this even requires proof. I think it is indisputable. But this is precisely the *theoretical* basis and all the separate questions must be *centred on this*. If this is disputed, I shall briefly indicate (briefly for the time being) that it is precisely the course of events, the facts and the *history* of 1905-07 that have *proved* the importance I have indicated of the agrarian (peasant, and of course petty-bourgeois peasant, but not com-

munal peasant) question in Russia. The same is *now* proved by the law of June 16 [3], 1907, and by the composition and activity of the Third Duma, in particular by the law of December 3 [November 20], 1909, and (what is especially important) by the government's agrarian policy. If we agree that the *most recent* history of Russia, the history of 1905-09, has *proved* the fundamental, prime, national significance (national in the above sense) of the agrarian question in confirmation of a definite type of bourgeois evolution of Russia, then we can proceed further; otherwise we cannot.

By 1905 the bourgeois development of Russia had already matured sufficiently to demand the immediate break-up of the antiquated superstructure—the antiquated mediæval system of land tenure (you understand, of course, why, of the *entire* superstructure, I take here land tenure alone). We are now living in the period of *this* break-up, which the various classes of *bourgeois* Russia are *trying* to complete, to consummate in their own way: the peasants (plus the workers) by means of nationalisation (I am very glad we fully agree on the absolute absurdity of municipalisation: I have already quoted passages from *Theorien über den Mehrwert*<sup>1</sup> in favour of nationalisation in one of my works printed *in part* in Polish); the landlords (plus the old bourgeoisie, the Girondist bourgeoisie) by the method of November 22 [9], 1906, etc. Land nationalisation, *i.e.*, the break-up of the old system of land tenure by the peasants, is the economic basis of the American way. The law of November 22 [9], 1906, *i.e.*, the break-up of the old system of land tenure in the interests of the landlords, is the economic basis of the Prussian way. Our epoch, 1905-19?? is the epoch of the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary struggle between *these* ways, *just as* 1848-71 in Germany was a period of the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary struggle between two paths to unity (*i.e.*, to the solution of the *national* problem of the bourgeois development of Germany), the path *through* the Great German Republic and the path *through*

<sup>1</sup> *Theories of Surplus Value*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

the Prussian monarchy. *It was only in 1871* that the second path was *finally* (that is where my “completely” comes in) *victorious*. It was then that Liebknecht gave up boycotting the parliament. It was then that the dispute between the Lassalleans and the Eisenachers *died down*. It was then that the question of a general *democratic* revolution in Germany *died down too*—and Naumann, David and Co. started in the 'nineties (twenty years *later!*) to revive the corpse.

In our country the struggle is *still* going on. Neither of the agrarian paths has won so far. In our country, in every crisis of *our* epoch (1905-1909-19??), a “*general democratic*” movement of the “muzhik” *will arise*, is bound to arise, and to ignore it would be a fundamental error which, *in practice*, would lead to Menshevism, although *in theory* the dispute may be placed on a different plane. It is not I who “reduce” the dispute to “Menshevism,” it is the *history* of our epoch that *reduces* to Menshevism the disregard of the proletariat for the national tasks of the bourgeois development of Russia, for this is precisely the *essence* of Menshevism.

*Nebenbei.*<sup>1</sup> Have you read, in Cherevanin's *Present Situation*, about the *opportunism* of the “classical presentation” of the question by the Bolsheviks? Read it!

*Ad 2)* I have really said almost all there is to be said about this. In Germany the support *by the workers* of the wishes of a “petty muzhik” to get *for himself* (i.e., the petty muzhik) the land of the big landlords—the *Junkers*—is *reactionary*. Isn't that so? Is that not true? In Russia in 1905-1909-19?? the *denial* of that support is *reactionary*. *Hic Rhodus hic salta.*<sup>2</sup> Here it is a question of either renouncing the entire agrarian programme and passing . . . almost to Cadetism . . . or of *recognising* the differences *in principle* between the presentation of the question in Germany and that in Russia, in principle—not in the sense that the epoch was non-capitalist in our country, but in the sense that these are two *altogether* different *epochs* of capitalism, differing in

<sup>1</sup> By the way.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Here is Rhodes, leap here!—*Ed.*

principle: the epoch *preceding* the final consolidation of the national path of capitalism, and the epoch *succeeding* such consolidation.

I conclude for the time being. I shall try to send you newspaper clippings on the subject of our discussion. Write when you can spare time. Warm greetings.

Yours,

STARIK.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Old Man.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

## THE QUESTION OF THE (GENERAL) AGRARIAN POLICY OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT

THE character of the agrarian policy of the government has radically changed since the Revolution of 1905. Formerly, autocracy followed the line of Katkov and Pobedonostsev and tried to appear in the eyes of the masses of the people as standing "above classes," safeguarding the interests of the broad masses of the peasants, safeguarding them against losing their land and protecting them from ruin. Needless to say, this hypocritical "concern" for the muzhik in reality masked a purely feudal policy which the above-mentioned "public men" of old pre-revolutionary Russia were carrying out with a stupid directness in all spheres of public and state life. Autocracy in those days relied entirely on the utter backwardness, benightedness and ignorance of the peasant masses. By posing as a champion of the "inalienability" of the peasants' allotments, as an advocate of the "village commune," autocracy, in the pre-revolutionary period, tried to rely on the economic immutability of Russia, on the deep political slumber of the masses of the peasant population. At that time the entire agrarian policy was a feudal aristocratic policy.

The Revolution of 1905 caused a change in the entire agrarian policy of the autocracy. Stolypin, punctiliously carrying out the dictates of the Council of the United Nobility, has decided, as he himself expressed it, to "put our stake on the strong."<sup>1</sup> This means that, after that mighty awakening of the proletariat and of the broad strata of the democratic peasantry which the Revolution of 1905 brought about in Russia, our government was no longer able to pose as a champion of the *weak*. The people, having succeeded in making the first (though as yet inadequate) breach

<sup>1</sup> Lenin refers to Stolypin's speech in the Third Duma on December 18 [5], 1908, "On the Peasants' Land Settlement Bill."—*Ed.*

in the old feudal, state system of Russia, proved thereby that it had awakened to such an extent from its political slumber that the fairy tale about the government protecting the "village commune" and the "inalienability of the allotments," about the defence of the weak by the government standing above classes was finally discredited among the peasants.

Until 1905 the government could entertain the hope that the thralldom and inertness of the entire mass of the peasants, who were incapable of ridding themselves of the age-long political prejudices of slavery, patience and obedience, would serve as a prop for it. So long as the peasants remained obedient and down-trodden, the government *could* pretend that it "put its stake on the weak," i.e., was taking care of the weak, although, in fact, it was concerned exclusively with the feudal landlords and the preservation of its own absolute power.

After 1905, the old political prejudices turned out to be so deeply and so widely discredited that the government and the Council of the United Serf-owners<sup>1</sup> saw that it was impossible to gamble any longer on the benightedness and the sheep-like obedience of the muzhik. The government saw that there *could be no peace* between it and the *masses* of the peasant population which it had ruined and reduced to complete destitution, ruin and starvation. It was this consciousness of the impossibility of "peace" with the peasants that caused the "Council of the United Serf-owners" to change its policy. The Council decided to try at all costs to split the peasantry and to create out of it a stratum of "new landlords," well-to-do peasant proprietors, who would "conscientiously" protect *from the masses* the peace and security of the huge landlords' estates, which, after all, had suffered somewhat from the onslaught of the revolutionary masses in 1905.

Therefore, the change in the entire agrarian policy of the government after the revolution is not accidental by any means. On the contrary, from the *class* point of view, this change was a *necessity* for the government and for the "Council of the United Serf-owners." The government could find no other way out. The gov-

<sup>1</sup> I.e., The Council of the United Nobility.—Ed.

ernment saw that there could be no "peace" with the masses of the peasants, that the peasantry had awakened from its age-long slumber of serfdom. The government had no alternative but *to try* by convulsive efforts *to split* the peasantry, no matter how much this might ruin the villages, to surrender the countryside to "plunder and exploitation" by the kulaks and the well-to-do muzhiks, and to place its reliance on the *alliance* between the feudal nobles and the "new landlords," *i.e.*, the alliance with the rich peasant proprietors, with the peasant bourgeoisie.

Stolypin himself, who has served the "Council of the United Serf-owners" faithfully and well and has carried out their policy, has said: "Give me twenty years of quiet and I shall reform Russia." By "quiet" he meant the *quiet of a graveyard*, the quiet suffering of the countryside silently enduring unprecedented ruin and destitution like sheep. By "quiet" he meant the quiet of the *landlords* who would like to see the peasants utterly inert, downtrodden, offering no protest, ready to starve peacefully and amiably, to give up their land, to abandon their villages, to be ruined, if only the landed gentry were comfortable and pleased. By reforming Russia, Stolypin meant a change that would leave in the villages only contented landlords, contented kulaks and bloodsuckers, and scattered, downtrodden, helpless and impotent farm labourers.

It is quite natural and intelligible that Stolypin, as a landlord, should desire with all his heart to have twenty years of this quiet of the graveyard for Russia. But we know now, we all see and feel now, that neither "reform" nor "quiet" has resulted from it, but famine, which has affected thirty million peasants,<sup>1</sup> an unparalleled (unparalleled even in long-suffering Russia) intensification of destitution and ruin, and extremely great bitterness and ferment among the peasantry.

In order to understand the causes of the *failure* of the government's so-called "Stolypin" agrarian policy, which the State Duma is invited once more to approve by sanctioning the budget (and

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the very bad crop failure in 1911, which involved twenty gubernias and oblasts of the eastern part of European Russia and Western Siberia with a population of thirty million people.—*Ed.*



which undoubtedly will be approved by the landlords' parties in the Duma), I shall dwell at somewhat greater length on the *two* principal, so to say, *trump cards* of our "new" agrarian policy:

First, on the re-settlement of the peasants, and, secondly, on the notorious *homesteads*.

As regards re-settlement, the Revolution of 1905, which revealed to the landlords the political awakening of the peasantry, forced them to "open" the safety valve a little, and instead of hampering migration as they had done before, to try to render the atmosphere less "tense" in Russia, to try to *pack off* as many *restless* peasants as possible to Siberia.

Did the government achieve success? Did it achieve any *pacification* of the peasantry, any improvement in the peasants' conditions in Russia and in Siberia? Just the opposite. The government only brought about a new sharpening and worsening of the conditions of the peasants *both in Russia and in Siberia*.

I shall prove this to you in a moment. In the explanatory memorandum of the Minister of Finance on the Finance Bill for 1913 we find the usual official optimism and praises of the "successes" of the government's policy.

The settlers, we are told, transform the vacant regions into "civilised localities," the settlers are growing rich, improving their farms, and so on and so forth. The usual official panegyric. The old, old "*everything is all right*," "*all quiet on Shipka Hill*."<sup>1</sup>

The only pity is that the explanatory memorandum *completely* ignored the statistics of returned settlers!! A strange and significant silence!

Yes, gentlemen, the number of settlers increased after 1905, and reached an average of half a million a year. Yes, by 1908, the migration wave reached high water mark: 665,000 settlers in one year. But later the wave began *rapidly to recede*, and reached 189,000 in 1911. Is it not clear that the highly praised government "settlement" of the migrants has turned out to be *bluff*? Is it not

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the Russo-Turkish war in 1878-79. The Russians were stationed in Shipka, a hilly district in Bulgaria. In spite of the heavy losses suffered by the Russian troops, the official news invariably reported, "All quiet on Shipka Hill."—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

clear that only six years after the revolution the government is returning to the *broken trough*?<sup>1</sup>

And the statistics of the number of returned settlers—so prudently ignored by the Minister of Finance in his “explanatory” (or rather confusing) memorandum—these statistics reveal a *monstrous* increase in the number of returned settlers—*up to 30 or 40 per cent in 1910, and up to 60 per cent in 1911*. This gigantic wave of returning settlers reveals the desperate suffering, ruin and destitution of the peasants who sold everything at home in order to go to Siberia, and who are now forced to come back from Siberia utterly ruined and pauperised.

This enormous stream of destitute returned settlers reveals with irrefutable clarity the *complete failure* of the government’s re-settlement policy. To produce tables showing the improvement in the farms of the settlers who remained in Siberia for a long time (as was done in the explanatory memorandum on the estimates of the Re-settlement Board) and to *hush up* the complete and final ruin of *tens of thousands* of returned settlers simply means distorting the figures! This means treating the Duma deputies to castles in Spain and to fairy tales about general well-being, whereas in fact we observe ruin and destitution.

Gentlemen, the fact that the Minister of Finance’s explanatory memorandum conceals the figures of the returned settlers, their desperate, destitute condition, their utter ruin, signifies *desperate* attempts on the part of the government to *conceal the truth*. In vain. Truth will out! Truth will compel recognition. The destitution of the ruined peasants who *returned* to Russia, the destitution of the ruined old inhabitants of Siberia, will *compel* you to speak about them.

In order to explain graphically the conclusion I draw concerning the utter failure of the re-settlement policy of the government I shall quote another opinion, that of an official, who for twenty-seven years—*twenty-seven years*, gentlemen!—served in the Forestry Department in Siberia, an official who has studied the

<sup>1</sup> From Pushkin’s fairy tale about the fisherman and the golden fish. “To return to the broken trough” means reverting to the original state of poverty and destitution.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

conditions of migration, an official who *was unable to bear* all the abominations that are committed in our Re-settlement Department.

This official is State Councillor *A. I. Komarov*, who, after serving for twenty-seven years, could not but acknowledge that the notorious journey of Stolypin and Krivoshein, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture and Land Settlement respectively, to Siberia in 1910 was a "*buffoonery tour*"—such is literally the expression used by a State Councillor, civil servant of twenty-seven years' standing!! This official *resigned the service*, he could not tolerate the deception of all Russia that was being practised by means of such "*buffoonery tours*," and he published a special pamphlet containing a truthful account of all the thefts and embezzlement of government funds, the utter absurdity, brutality and wastefulness of our re-settlement policy.

This pamphlet is entitled *The Truth About Re-settlement* and was published in St. Petersburg in the present year, 1913, price sixty kopeks—not dear, considering the wealth of revealing material it contains. As usual our government, in connection with re-settlement affairs, as in all other "*affairs*" and "*branches of administration*," is exerting every effort to conceal the truth, and fears lest "*its dirty linen be washed in public*." The official, Komarov, had to *lie low* as long as he was in the service, he had to write his letters of exposure to the newspapers under an *assumed name*, and the authorities tried to "*catch*" the correspondent. Not all officials get the opportunity to leave the service and publish pamphlets that reveal the truth! But one such pamphlet enables us to judge what rottenness, what an abomination of desolation generally, reigns in this "*dark realm*."

The official, *A. I. Komarov*, is not a revolutionary. Nothing of the sort. He himself tells us about his loyal hostility to the theories of both the Social-Democrats and the Socialist-Revolutionaries. No, he is an ordinary, very loyal, Russian official, who would be quite satisfied with elementary, rudimentary honesty and decency. He is a man who is hostile to the Revolution of 1905 and ready to serve the counter-revolutionary government.

It is all the more significant, therefore, that even such a man has left, has abandoned the service, shaking its dust from his feet. He could not stand the fact that our re-settlement policy meant the "*complete smashing of all that is called rational forestry.*" (P. 138.) He could not stand the "*expropriation of the arable land of the old inhabitants*" which leads to the "*gradual impoverishment of the old inhabitants.*" (Pp. 137 and 138.) He could not stand "*such*" *plunder*, or rather *devastation*, of Siberian lands and forests by the state in comparison with which the "*plunder of Bashkir lands in the days of old is a mere trifle.*" (P. 3.)

The following are the conclusions of that official:

"*Utter unpreparedness of the General Re-settlement Board for carrying on the work on a large scale . . . absolute lack of planning in the work and bad quality of the work . . . allotment of plots with soil unsuitable for agriculture, where there is no water at all, or no drinking water.*" (P. 137.)

When the tide of migration rose, the officials were caught napping.

"They divided up the state forest lands, which seemingly only yesterday were put into proper shape, into tiny plots . . . took the first thing they set their eyes on, as long as they could find place for, get rid of, those *scores of emaciated people with tired faces* who were hanging around the re-settlement base and standing for hours in the ante-chamber of the Re-settlement Board." (P. 11.)

Here are a few examples. The *Kurinsky* area is set apart for settlers. This area consists of land that had been taken from the native races near the Altai salt works. The natives are robbed. The new settlers get salt water unfit for drinking purposes! The government ceaselessly wastes money on digging wells—but without success. The new settlers have to drive 7 and 8 (seven and eight!) versts for water!! (P. 101.)

The Vyezdnoy area in the upper reaches of the Mana River: thirty families were settled there. After seven hard years the new settlers finally became convinced that farming was impossible there. *Nearly all of them fled.* The few who remained engage in hunting and fishing. (P. 27.)

The Chuno-Angara region: *hundreds* of plots are mapped out—900 plots, 460 plots, etc. There are no settlers. Impossible to live there. Mountain ridges, marshes, undrinkable water.

And now the official, A. I. Komarov, tells the *truth which is disagreeable* to the government about those returned settlers whom the Minister of Finance did not mention.

"*Many hundreds of thousands*," he says about those ruined and destitute returned settlers, "return as elements of a type," writes the official, Komarov, "such as in the future revolution, if such takes place, is destined to play a terrible role. . . . It is not those who have been farm labourers all their lives . . . who return . . . but men who only recently were property owners, men who could never conceive of their being divorced from the land, and these men, justly angry at the injury done them, because they have been reduced to ruin, because of the failure to settle them—these men are a menace to any political system." (P. 74.)

Thus writes the official, Komarov, who is afraid of revolution. Komarov is mistaken in thinking that only *landlord* "state systems" are possible. In the best and most cultured states they manage to get along *even without* the landlords. Russia could also manage without them to the advantage of the people.

Komarov reveals the *ruin* of the old inhabitants. "Failure of crops" and, to tell the truth, *famine*, arising from the plunder of the old inhabitants, began to visit even "Siberian Italy"—Minusinsk Uyezd. Mr. Komarov exposes the way in which the contractors rob the Treasury, the utter fictitiousness of the reports and plans drawn up by the officials, the worthlessness of their work such as the Ob-Yenissei Canal, which swallowed up millions, the waste of *hundreds of millions of rubles*.

All our re-settlement schemes, states this godfearing modest official, are "*nothing but a long and nasty anecdote*." (P. 134.)

Such is the *truth* concerning the *returned* settlers that has been hushed up by the Minister of Finance! Such in *reality* is the utter *failure* of our re-settlement policy! Ruin and destitution *both* in Russia and in Siberia. Plunder of lands, the utter *destruction* of forests, false reports and official mendacity and hypocrisy.

Let us pass on to the question of the homesteads.

On his question, too, the explanatory memorandum of the Minister of Finance gives us the same, general, meaningless, official, hypocritical data (or rather alleged data) as on the question of migration.

We are informed that by 1912 over one and a half million

households had definitely abandoned the village commune; that over a million of these households have been established as homesteads.

*Not a single* truthful word has been uttered *anywhere* in the government reports about the real state of the homesteads!!

We know already, from the descriptions given of the new land settlements by honest observers (like the late Ivan Andreyevich Konovalov) and from our own observations of the countryside and of peasant life, that there are *homestead peasants* of two altogether different categories. The government, by confusing these categories, by giving data of a general kind, is only deceiving the people.

One category of homestead peasants, an insignificant minority, are the well-to-do peasants, the kulaks, who even before the new land settlement schemes were introduced, lived very well. Such peasants, by leaving the village commune and buying up the allotments of the poor, are undoubtedly enriching themselves at other people's expense, still further ruining and enslaving the masses of the population. But, I repeat, there are *very few* homestead peasants of this type.

Another category of homestead peasants predominates, and predominates to an overwhelming degree, *viz.*, the ruined destitute peasants, who went to the homesteads out of sheer need, for they had nowhere else to go. These peasants say: "Nowhere to go, then let us go to the homesteads." Starving and toiling on their beggarly farms, they clutch at the last straw for the sake of the re-settlement grant, for the sake of the settlement loan. On these farms they suffer untold hardships; they sell all their grain in order to pay their instalment to the bank; they are always in debt; in a state of dire distress, they live like beggars; they are *driven* from the homesteads for *non-payment of instalments* and they are finally transformed into homeless tramps.

Now, if instead of treating us to meaningless pictures of fictitious prosperity the official statistics had truthfully informed us of the number of these *destitute homestead peasants* who are living in dugouts, herding together with their cattle, starving, with sick and

ragged children—then we would hear the “*truth about the homesteads.*”

But the point is that the government does its utmost to conceal this truth about the homesteads. Independent, detached observers of peasant life are prosecuted and deported from the villages. Peasants writing to the newspapers come up against tyranny, oppression and persecution by the authorities and the police, of a nature unparalleled even in Russia.

A handful of rich homestead peasants are represented as masses of thriving peasants! The official lie about the kulaks is represented as the truth about the countryside! But the government will not succeed in concealing the truth. The attempts of the government to conceal the truth about the ruined and starving countryside only call forth legitimate *bitterness* and *rage* among the peasants. The fact that tens of millions of peasants are starving, as was also the case last year and the year before, reveals better than any long discussion the mendacity and hypocrisy of the fairy tales about the beneficial influence of the homesteads. This fact shows most clearly that *even after* the change in the government's agrarian policy, *and after* the notorious Stolypin reforms, the countryside is just as overwhelmed by oppression, exploitation, destitution, lack of human rights as it was under serfdom. The “new” agrarian policy of the Council of the United Nobility did not affect the *old* serf-owners or mitigate the oppression exercised through their huge, thousand and ten thousand dessiatin estates. The “new” agrarian policy enriched the *old* landlords and a handful of the peasant bourgeoisie, and ruined the masses of the peasants to a still greater extent.

“We put our stake on the strong,” exclaimed the late Stolypin in explanation and justification of his agrarian policy. These words are well worth noting and remembering as extraordinarily truthful, exceptionally truthful words for a minister. These peasants well understood and learned to their own cost the truthfulness of these words, which mean that the *new* laws and the *new* agrarian policy were laws for the *rich* and made by the *rich*, a policy for the *rich* and carried out by the *rich*. The peasants understood the “simple game,” *viz.*, that the master class Duma makes laws for the master

class—that the government is the instrument of the will and the instrument of the rule of the feudal landlords over Russia.

If Stolypin wanted to teach *this* to the peasants by means of his “famous” (infamous) dictum: “We put our stake on the strong,” we are sure he has found and will find apt pupils among the masses of the ruined and embittered who, having learned *on whom* the government places its stake, will understand so much the better *on whom they themselves* should place their stake: on the working class and on its struggle for freedom.

In order not to make unsupported statements, I shall quote a few examples from real life given by so able an observer, one so boundlessly devoted to his work, as Ivan Andreyevich Konovalov. (Ivan Konovalov, *Sketches of the Modern Village*, St. Petersburg, 1913. Price 1 ruble, 50 kopeks. In the quotations the pages are indicated.)

In Liven Uyezd, Orel Gubernia, four estates have been divided into homesteads: that of Grand Duke Andrey Vladimirovich—5,000 dessiatins, of Polyakov—900 dessiatins, of Nabokov—400 dessiatins, of Korf—600 dessiatins. The total is about 7,000 dessiatins. The size of the homesteads is fixed at 9 dessiatins each and only in exceptional cases at 12 dessiatins. Thus, there are in all a little over 600 homesteads.

In order to explain the significance of these figures more graphically, I shall quote the official statistics of 1905 referring to Orel Gubernia. Five nobles in this gubernia owned 143,446 dessiatins, i.e., an average of 28,000 dessiatins each. It is obvious that such monstrously big estates are not wholly cultivated by the owners; they only serve for the oppression and enslavement of the peasants. The number of former landlords’ peasants in Orel Gubernia in 1905 with holdings not exceeding 5 dessiatins per farm was 44,500, owning a total of 173,000 dessiatins of land. The landlord owns 28,000 dessiatins and the “landlord’s” muzhik of the poorer class—4 dessiatins.

In 1905, the number of nobles in Orel Gubernia owning 500 dessiatins of land and over was 378, with a total of 592,000 dessiatins of land, i.e., an average of over 1,500 dessiatins each; while



the number of "former landlords'" peasants in Orel Gubernia having up to 7 dessiatins per household was 124,000, with a total of 647,000 dessiatins, i.e., an average of 5 *dessiatins* per household.

One can judge by this to what extent the Orel peasants are oppressed by the feudal estates and what a drop in the ocean of misery and destitution were the *four* estates in Liven Uyezd that were divided into homesteads. But how do the homestead peasants live on their 9 dessiatin plots?

The land has been valued at 220 rubles per dessiatin. They have to pay 118 rubles and 80 kopeks per annum (i.e., about 20 rubles per dessiatin of sown area). A poor peasant is incapable of paying so much. He lets a part of the land cheaply if only to get some ready cash. He sells all his grain to pay the instalment due to the bank. He has nothing left, either for seed or for food. He borrows, enslaves himself again. He has only one horse, he has sold his cow. The implements are old. No use even to think of improving the farm. "The kiddies have already forgotten the colour, let alone the taste, of milk." (P. 198.) Falling into arrears with his instalment this sort of farmer is driven off his plot and his ruin is then complete.

In his explanatory memorandum, the Minister of Finance complacently tried to gloss over this ruin of the peasants by the new land settlement, or rather land unsettlement.

On page 57 of the second part of the explanatory memorandum the Minister gives official figures of the number of peasants who had sold their land by the end of 1911. Their number is 385,407 *families*.

And the Minister "*consoles*" us by saying: the number of buyers (362,840) "*is very close to the number of sellers*" (385,407). For each seller we get on an average 3.9 dessiatins, for each buyer—4.2 dessiatins. (P. 58 of the explanatory memorandum.)

What is there reassuring in this? In the first place, even these official figures show that the number of buyers is *less* than the number of sellers. This means that the ruin and destitution of the countryside is increasing. And secondly, who does not know that

the buyers of allotments evade the law, which forbids the purchase of land above a small number of dessiatins, by buying in the name of the wife, of relations, or of some other person? Who does not know that the selling of land under the guise of various other transactions, such as a lease, etc., is very widely practised by the peasants out of sheer necessity. Read, for instance, the works of the semi-Cadet, semi-Octobrist Prince Obolensky in *Russkaya Mysl*,<sup>1</sup> and you will see that even this landlord, who is thoroughly imbued with the views of his class, admits the fact that the allotments are bought up to an *enormous* extent by the rich, and that these purchases are *masked* by means of evasions of the law in thousands of different ways!!

No, gentlemen! The "new" agrarian policy of the government and the nobles was *all* the honourable nobles could produce; it left their property and their revenues intact and often even increased their revenues by *inflating* the price of the land for sale and by the thousands of favours the Peasants' Bank extends to the nobles.

And these nobles' "*all*" proved to be *nothing*. The countryside is more ruined, more *embittered*. The bitterness of feeling in the villages is terrible. What is termed "hooliganism" is due mainly to the incredible bitterness of feeling prevailing among the peasants and to the *rudimentary* forms of *their protest*. No persecution, no increasing of punishments will allay this bitterness and stop this protest of millions of hungry peasants who are now being ruined by the "re-distribution" of the land with unprecedented rapidity, roughness and brutality.

No, the nobles' or the Stolypin agrarian policy is not the way out; it is only a very painful *approach* towards a new *solution* of the agrarian problem in Russia. What this solution should be is shown indirectly even by the fate of Ireland where, in spite of a thousand delays, hindrances and obstacles placed in the way by the landlords, the land has after all passed into the hands of the farmers.

The essence of the agrarian problem in Russia is most strikingly

<sup>1</sup> *Russian Thought*.—Ed Eng ed.

revealed by the figures of the big landlord estates. These figures are given in the official government statistics of 1905, and anyone who is seriously concerned about the fate of the Russian peasantry and the state of affairs in the entire field of politics of our country should study them with great attention.

Let us consider the big landlord estates in European Russia: 27,833 landlords own over 500 dessiatins each, with a total of 62,000,000 *dessiatins of land*!! Adding to these the land owned by the imperial family and the enormous estates of the manufacturers in the Urals, we get 70,000,000 dessiatins owned by less than 30,000 landlords. This gives on an average over 2,000 dessiatins to each big landlord. The size the biggest estates attain in Russia is seen from the fact that 699 landlords own more than 10,000 dessiatins each, with a total of 20,798,504 dessiatins. On an average these magnates possess almost 30,000 (29,754) dessiatins each!!

It is not easy to find in Europe, or even in the entire world, another country where big feudal landownership has been preserved on such a monstrous scale.

And the most important point is that capitalist farming, *i.e.*, the cultivation of the soil by hired labourers with the implements and tools of the owners, is being conducted only on a part of these lands. For the most part, farming is being conducted on *feudal* lines, *i.e.*, the landlords enslave the peasants as they did one hundred, three hundred, and five hundred years ago, forcing the peasants to cultivate the landlords' land with the *peasants'* horses, with the *peasants'* implements.

This is not capitalism. This is not the European method of farming, Messieurs Rights and Octobrists; take note of this, you who are boasting of your desire to "Europeanise" (*i.e.*, re-fashion in the European way) agriculture in Russia! No, this is not European at all. This is the *old Chinese way*. This is the *Turkish way*. This is the *feudal way*.

This is not up-to-date farming, it is land usury. It is the old, old enslavement. The poor peasant, who even in the best year remains a pauper and half-starved, who owns a weak, starving horse and

old, miserable, wretched implements, is becoming the slave of the landlord, of the "*barin*,"<sup>1</sup> because he, the muzhik, has no alternative.

The "*barin*" will neither lease his land, nor give right of way, nor watering places for animals, nor meadows, nor timber, unless the peasant enslaves himself. If a peasant is caught "illegally" felling wood in the forest, what happens? He is beaten up by the foresters, Circassians, etc., and then the "*barin*," who in the Duma delivers fervent speeches on the progress of our agriculture and on the necessity of copying Europe—this very *barin* offers the following alternative to the beaten muzhik: either go to prison or cultivate, plough, sow and harvest two or three dessiatins! The same thing happens when the peasants' cattle trespass on the landlords' estates. The same for the winter loan of grain. The same for the use of meadows and pastures, and so on without end.

This is not big landlord farming. It is the *enslavement* of the muzhik. It is the *feudal* exploitation of millions of impoverished peasants by means of estates of thousands of dessiatins, the estates of the landlords who have been squeezing and stifling the muzhik on all sides.

The homesteads are helping out a handful of rich peasants. But the masses continue to starve as heretofore. Why is it, honourable landlords, that Europe has not known famine for a long time? Why is it that terrible famines, such as that which raged in our country in 1910-11, occurred there only under serfdom?

Because in Europe there is no serf bondage. There are rich and middle peasants and there are labourers in Europe, but not millions of utterly ruined, destitute peasants, driven to madness by perennial suffering and hard labour, disfranchised, down-trodden, dependent on the "*barin*."

What is to be done? What is the way out?

There is only one way out: the liberation of the countryside from the oppression of these feudal latifundia, the transfer of these *seventy million* dessiatins of land from the landlords to the

<sup>1</sup> The master, the lord.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

peasants, a transfer that must be effected without any compensation.

Only such a solution can make Russia really resemble a European country. Only such a solution will enable the millions of Russian peasants to breathe freely and recover. Only such a solution will make it possible to transform Russia from a country of perennially starving, destitute peasants, crushed by bondage to the landlord, into a country of "European progress"—from a country of illiterate people into a literate country—from a country of backwardness and hopeless stagnation into a country capable of developing and going forward—from a disfranchised country, a country of slaves, into a free country.

And the party of the working class, knowing that without free, democratic institutions there is and there can be no road to socialism, points, as a way out of the blind alley into which the government with its agrarian policy has again led Russia, to the free transfer of all the landlords' estates to the peasants, to the winning of full political liberty by a new revolution.

June 1913.

## THE AGRARIAN QUESTION AND THE PRESENT STATE OF RUSSIA

### NOTES OF A PUBLICIST

Two interesting articles on the above subject have appeared in magazines recently. One in the liquidators' *Nasha Zarya* (1913, by N. Rozhkov), the other in the Right Cadets' *Russkaya Mysl* (1913, No. 8, by Y. Y. Polferov). There is no doubt that the two authors wrote without knowing of each other; they started out from totally different premises.

And yet there is a striking similarity between these two articles. One can clearly observe, and this invests both articles with special importance, the kinship in principle between the ideas of the liberal labour politicians and the ideas of the counter-revolutionary liberal bourgeois.

The material used by N. Rozhkov is exactly the same as that used by Mr. Polferov, except that the latter's material is more extensive. Capitalism began to grow in Russian agriculture after the 1905 Revolution. The prices of grain and land are rising, imports of agricultural machines and fertilizers are increasing; so also is the home production of both. The small credit institutions are growing; the number of persons leaving the commune and establishing homesteads is growing. Wages are rising (44.2 per cent increase from 1890 to 1910, we are informed by N. Rozhkov, who forgets the increase in the cost of living during that period!). Commercial cattle breeding, dairy farming, grass growing and instruction on agricultural matters are on the increase.

All this is very interesting, no doubt. From the standpoint of Marxism, there can be no doubt that it is impossible to stop the growth of capitalism. Had the authors merely explained this by new data, they would have deserved only thanks.

But the whole point is the appraisal of the data and the con-

clusions drawn from them. In this connection N. Rozhkov displays a rashness that is almost touching.

"Feudal landlord economy has become transformed into bourgeois capitalist economy . . . the transition to the bourgeois system in agriculture is an accomplished fact which is beyond doubt. . . . The agrarian problem in its previous form is no longer on the order of the day in Russia. . . . We must not attempt to galvanise the corpse . . . the agrarian problem in its old form."

The conclusions, as the reader will perceive, are quite clear and quite . . . liquidationist. The editors of the liquidationist magazine (as is the long-established custom in commercial, unprincipled magazines) make a reservation:

"There is much in this with which we do not agree . . . we do not deem it possible to assert as *positively* as does N. Rozhkov that Russia will follow precisely the path mapped out by the law of November 22 [9]- June 27 [14]."

The liquidators are "not as positive" as N. Rozhkov! What a profound attitude on principle!

N. Rozhkov in his article proves over and over again that he has *learned by rote* a number of Marxian propositions, but that he *has not understood them*. That is why they so easily "slipped out" of his head!

The capitalist development of agriculture in Russia proceeded also in 1861-1904. All the symptoms now indicated by Rozhkov and Polferov existed even at that time. The development of capitalism did not prevent the *bourgeois-democratic* crisis in 1905, but prepared and intensified it. Why? Because the old, natural, semi-serf economy was undermined, but the *conditions necessary for a new*, bourgeois economy had not been created. Hence the extraordinary acuteness of the crisis of 1905.

Rozhkov says that the ground for *such* crises has disappeared. Speaking in the abstract, *i.e.*, speaking of capitalism in general, and *not* of Russia, *not* of 1913, this, of course, is possible. Needless to say, Marxists admit the existence of a bourgeois-democratic agrarian problem only under special conditions (*not* always and *not* everywhere).

But Rozhkov fails even to understand what propositions he must prove if he wants to confirm his *concrete* conclusion.

The peasants are dissatisfied with their position? "But nowhere are the peasants satisfied with their position," writes Rozhkov.

To compare and to identify the dissatisfaction of West European peasants, who under the entirely bourgeois regime of their village, as well as of their juridical status, form a "party of order," to compare and identify this with the *famines* in Russia, with the *complete* degradation of the village based on the system of orders, with the *complete* serf regime in the domain of law, etc., is simply childish and ridiculous. Rozhkov does not see the wood for the trees.

He writes: Capitalism is growing, the *barshchina* (*otrabotki*) system is declining.

"The overwhelming majority of the landlords," writes the liberal Polferov, "are more and more adopting the deposit system and the share-cropping system, which is exclusively the result of the financial and land needs of the peasant!"

The liberal writing in *Russkaya Mysl* is a less naive optimist than the ex-Marxist who writes in the liquidationist *Nasha Zarya*.

N. Rozhkov did not even touch upon the figures showing the *degree* to which share-cropping, *otrabotki*, *barshchina* and bondage are practised in the *present-day* countryside. With remarkable thoughtlessness, Rozhkov ignored the fact that these are *still* very widely practised. And from this follows that the *bourgeois-democratic* crisis has become still more acute. "Don't galvanise the corpse," writes the liquidator, echoing in everything the liberal, who in *different* words declares the demands of 1905 to be a "corpse."

To this we replied: Markov and Purishkevich<sup>1</sup> are not corpses. The economy which produced them and is still producing them is not dead. The struggle against this class is the live task of live workers, with a live understanding of their class aims.

The renunciation of this task is a sign of the *putrefaction* of the liquidators, not all of whom talk "as positively" as Rozhkov, but

<sup>1</sup> Extreme reactionary leaders of the Black Hundreds.—Ed. Eng. ed.



*all* of whom forget, or gloss over, the struggle against agrarian (especially landowning) Purishkevichism and political Purishkevichism.

The domination of Purishkevichism in our life is the reverse side of the same medal, which in the rural districts is called *otrabotki*, bondage, *barshchina*, serfdom, the absence of the most elementary, general conditions of bourgeois farming. If the millionaire masters (the Guchkovs and Co.) are grumbling at the top, it signifies that the conditions of millions of small proprietors (peasants) below are altogether impossible.

In making it their task to attack the foundations of Purishkevichism, the workers do not in the least deviate from "their" tasks in order to galvanise something that is alien to them. No. They *thereby* make clear to *themselves* the democratic tasks of *their* struggle, of their class, they thereby teach the broad masses democracy and the A B C of socialism. For only "royal Prussian socialism" (as Marx said of Schweitzer ) is capable of leaving in the shade the feudal autocracy of Purishkevichism in general and landowning Purishkevichism in particular.

Without noticing it himself, Rozhkov slipped to the level of Polferov, who says that "additional plots of land alone" would not have been the "salvation" without intensification! As if intensification would not have proceeded a hundred times more rapidly *owing to the removal* of Purishkevichism! As if we are discussing only the peasants—whether to give them "additional land" or not—and not the *whole* people, the *whole* development of capitalism, which is being mutilated and retarded by Purishkevichism.

Rozhkov blurted out the *essence* of liquidationism by indicating the *connection* between the all-embracing slogan of "freedom of association" (compare the presentation of this slogan in Tulyakov's *liberal* speech with Badayev's *Marxian* speech in the State Duma on November 5 [October 23], 1913)—by indicating the connection between this slogan and *reconciliation* with the present position of the agrarian problem.

This connection is an objective fact; no "reservations" of *Nasha Zarya* will remove it.

Give up thinking of the whole people, of Purishkevichism in our whole life, of peasant famines, of *barshchina*, of serfdom; fight for "legality," for "freedom of association" as a reform—such are the *ideas* which the *bourgeoisie* is instilling in the workers. Being unconscious of this, Rozhkov and the liquidators are merely following in the wake of the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, our opinion is that the proletariat, the foremost representative of all the toiling masses, cannot advance to its own emancipation except by waging an all-sided struggle against Purishkevichism for the sake and in the interests of the struggle against the bourgeoisie—such are the ideas which distinguish the Marxist from the liberal labour politician.

November 1913.

PART IV

THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN THE PERIOD  
1908-1914



## ON THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

POINT nine of the programme of the Russian Marxists which refers to the right of nations to self-determination has given rise lately (as we have already pointed out in *Prosveshcheniye*<sup>1</sup>) to a regular crusade of the opportunists. The Russian liquidator, Semkovsky, in the St. Petersburg liquidationist newspaper, the Bundist Liebmann and the Ukrainian National-Socialist Yurkevich severely came down upon this point in their respective journals, and treated it with an air of supreme contempt. There is no doubt that this "twelve languages invasion"<sup>2</sup> of opportunism into our Marxian programme is closely connected with the modern nationalistic vacillations in general. Hence, we think that a detailed analysis of the question raised is opportune. We shall only observe that none of the above-mentioned opportunists has adduced a single independent argument; all of them only repeat what was said by Rosa Luxemburg in her long Polish article of 1908-09, "The National Question and Autonomy." In our exposition we shall deal mainly with the "original" arguments of this last-named author.

### I. WHAT IS SELF-DETERMINATION OF NATIONS?

Naturally, this question arises first of all when attempts are made to consider so-called self-determination in a Marxian way. What should be understood by it? Are we to look for an answer in juridical definitions deduced from all sorts of "general concepts" of law? Or should we seek an answer in the historical and economic study of the national movements?

<sup>1</sup> Lenin refers to his article "Critical Notes on the National Question." (See *Collected Works*, Russian ed., Vol. XVII.)—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> This expression is used in reference to Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

No wonder Messieurs the Semkovskys, Liebmanns and Yurkeviches did not even think of raising this question, but limited themselves merely to sneering about the "obscurity" of the Marxian programme, apparently not knowing in their simplicity that self-determination of nations is dealt with not only in the Russian programme of 1903, but also in the resolution of the London International Congress of 1896. (I shall deal with this in detail in the proper place.<sup>1</sup>) Far more remarkable is the fact that Rosa Luxemburg, who declaims a great deal about the alleged abstract and metaphysical nature of that point, herself fell victim to the sin of abstraction and metaphysics. It is Rosa Luxemburg herself who is continually falling into the rut of general disquisitions on self-determination (including the very amusing speculation on the question of how the will of the nation is to be ascertained) without anywhere clearly and precisely asking herself whether the issue is determined by juridical definitions or by the experience of the national movements of the whole world.

The precise formulation of this question, which a Marxist cannot avoid, would at once have undermined nine-tenths of Rosa Luxemburg's arguments. National movements did not first arise in Russia, nor are they peculiar to Russia alone. Throughout the world, the period of the final victory of capitalism over feudalism has been linked up with national movements. The economic basis of these movements is that in order to achieve complete victory for commodity production the bourgeoisie must capture the home market, must have politically united territories with a population speaking the same language, while all obstacles to the development of this language and to its consolidation in literature are removed. Language is the most important means of human intercourse; unity of language and unimpeded development are the most important conditions of a genuinely free and extensive commercial turnover corresponding to modern capitalism, of a free and broad grouping of the population in all their separate classes; finally, they are a condition for the close connection between the

<sup>1</sup> See part VII of this article.—*Ed.*

market and each and every proprietor and petty proprietor, seller and buyer.

The formation of *national states*, under which these requirements of modern capitalism are best satisfied, is therefore the tendency of every national movement. The deepest economic factors urge towards this goal, and for the whole of Western Europe, nay, for the entire civilised world, the *typical*, normal state for the capitalist period is, therefore, the national state.

Consequently, if we want to understand the meaning of self-determination of nations without juggling with legal definitions, without "inventing" abstract definitions, but examining the historical and economic conditions of the national movements, we shall inevitably reach the conclusion that self-determination of nations means the political separation of these nations from alien national bodies, the formation of an independent national state.

Later on, we shall see still other reasons why it would be incorrect to understand the right to self-determination to mean anything but the right to separate state existence. At present, we must deal with Rosa Luxemburg's efforts to "dismiss" the unavoidable conclusion concerning the deep economic foundations underlying the strivings for a national state.

Rosa Luxemburg is well acquainted with Kautsky's pamphlet *Nationality and Internationality*. (Supplement to *Die Neue Zeit*, No. 1, 1907-08; Russian translation in the magazine *Nauchnaya Mysl*,<sup>1</sup> Riga, 1910.) She knows that Kautsky, after carefully analysing the question of the national state in chapter four of that pamphlet, arrived at the conclusion that Otto Bauer "*underestimates* the force of the urge to create a national state." (P. 23 of the cited pamphlet.) Rosa Luxemburg herself quotes the following words of Kautsky: "The national state is the form of state *which corresponds most* to present-day conditions" (*i.e.*, capitalist, civilised, economically progressive conditions, as distinguished from mediæval, pre-capitalist, etc.), "it is the form in which it can best fulfil its tasks" (*i.e.*, the tasks of the freest, widest and

<sup>1</sup> *Scientific Thought*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

speediest development of capitalism). We must add to this a still more precise concluding remark by Kautsky: heterogeneous nation states (the so-called nationality states as distinguished from national states) are "always states whose internal constitution has for some reason or other remained abnormal or underdeveloped." Needless to say, Kautsky speaks of abnormality exclusively in the sense of lack of conformity with what is best adapted to the requirements of developing capitalism.

The question now is, how did Rosa Luxemburg treat Kautsky's historical-economic conclusions on this point? Are they right or wrong? Is Kautsky right in his historical-economic theory, or is Bauer, whose theory has a psychological basis? What is the connection between the undoubted "national opportunism" of Bauer, his defence of cultural-national autonomy, his nationalistic enthusiasm ("in some instances the emphasis on the national aspect," as Kautsky put it), his "enormous exaggeration of the national aspect and complete neglect of the international aspect" (Kautsky)—and his underestimation of the urge to create a national state?

Rosa Luxemburg failed even to raise this question. She failed to notice this connection. She did not weigh the *totality* of Bauer's theoretical views. She completely failed to contrast the historical-economic with the psychological theories in the national question. She confined herself to the following remarks in opposition to Kautsky:

"This 'best' national state is only an abstraction, which can easily be developed and defended theoretically, but which does not correspond to reality." (*Przegląd Socjal-Demokratyczny*,<sup>1</sup> 1908, No. 6, p. 499.)

And in corroboration of this bold statement there follow arguments to the effect that the "right to self-determination" of small nations is rendered illusory by the development of the great capitalist powers and by imperialism.

"Can one seriously speak," exclaims Rosa Luxemburg, "about the 'self-determination' of formally independent Montenegrins, Bulgarians, Rumanians, Serbs, Greeks, partly even the Swiss, whose independence is itself

<sup>1</sup> *Social-Democratic Review*.—Ed.



a result of the political struggle and the diplomatic game of the 'Concert of Europe'?"! (P. 500.)

The state that best suits the conditions is "not a national state, as Kautsky believes, but a predatory state." Several score of figures are quoted relating to the size of British, French and other colonies.

Reading such arguments one cannot help marvelling at how the author contrived not to understand *what's what!* To teach Kautsky with a serious mien that small states are economically dependent on big ones, that a struggle is going on between the bourgeois states over the predatory suppression of other nations, that imperialism and colonies exist—savours of ridiculously childish attempts at cleverness, for all this is altogether irrelevant. Not only small states, but even Russia, for example, is economically entirely dependent on the power of the imperialist finance capital of the "rich" bourgeois countries. Not only the miniature Balkan states, but even America in the nineteenth century was economically a colony of Europe, as Marx pointed out in *Capital*. Kautsky, and every Marxist, knows this very well, of course, but it has nothing whatever to do with the question of the national movements and the national state.

Rosa Luxemburg has substituted the question of the economic independence of states for the question of the political self-determination of nations in bourgeois society, and of their independence as states. This is as intelligent as if someone in discussing the demand in the programme for the supremacy of parliament, *i.e.*, the assembly of people's representatives in a bourgeois state, were to expound the perfectly correct idea of the supremacy of big capital under any regime in a bourgeois country.

There is no doubt that the greater part of Asia, the most populous part of the world, consists of either colonies of the "Great Powers" or of states which are extremely dependent and oppressed as nations. But does this commonly known circumstance in any way shake the undoubted fact that in Asia itself the conditions for the most complete development of commodity production, for the freest, widest and most rapid growth of capitalism, have been created only in Japan, *i.e.*, only in an independent national state?

This state is a bourgeois state, therefore, it itself has begun to oppress other nations and enslave colonies; we do not know whether Asia will have time before the downfall of capitalism to become crystallised into a system of independent national states, like Europe. But it remains undisputed that capitalism, having awakened Asia, has called forth national movements everywhere in Asia too, that the tendency of these movements is towards the creation of national states in Asia, that the best conditions for the development of capitalism are secured precisely by such states. The example of Asia speaks in *favour* of Kautsky and *against* Rosa Luxemburg.

The example of the Balkan states also speaks against her, for everyone can see now that the best conditions for the development of capitalism in the Balkans are created precisely in proportion to the creation of independent national states in that peninsula.

Therefore, Rosa Luxemburg notwithstanding, the example of the whole of progressive, civilised mankind, the example of the Balkans and the example of Asia prove that Kautsky's propositions are absolutely correct: the national state is the rule and the "norm" of capitalism, a heterogeneous nation state represents backwardness or is an exception. From the standpoint of national relations, the best conditions for the development of capitalism are presented, undoubtedly, by the national state. This does not mean, of course, that such a state could avoid the exploitation and oppression of nations on the basis of bourgeois relations. It only means that the Marxists cannot ignore the powerful *economic* factors that give rise to the aspiration to create national states. It means that "self-determination of nations" in the programme of the Marxists *cannot*, from a historical-economic point of view, have any other meaning than political self-determination, political independence, the formation of a national state.

On what conditions the bourgeois-democratic demand for a "national state" is to be supported from a Marxian, *i.e.*, class proletarian, point of view will be dealt with in detail later on. At present we confine ourselves to the definition of the concept "self-determination" and must only note that Rosa Luxemburg *knows* the content of the concept ("national state"), whereas her oppor-

tunist partisans, the Liebmanns, the Semkovskys, the Yurkeviches *do not even know that!*

## II. THE CONCRETE HISTORICAL PRESENTATION OF THE QUESTION

The categorical demand of Marxian theory in examining any social question is that it be placed within *definite* historical limits, and if it refers to one country (*e.g.*, the national programme for a given country), that the concrete peculiarities that distinguish that country from others within the same political epoch be taken into account.

What does this categorical demand of Marxism signify when applied to our question?

First of all, it signifies the necessity of strictly distinguishing two epochs of capitalism radically differing from each other from the point of view of the national movement. On the one hand, the epoch of the downfall of feudalism and absolutism, the epoch of the formation of bourgeois-democratic society and state, when the national movements for the first time become mass movements and in one way or another *all* classes of the population are drawn into politics by means of the press, participation in representative institutions, etc. On the other hand, we have an epoch of definitely crystallised capitalist states with a long-established constitutional regime, with a strongly developed antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie—an epoch that may be called the eve of the downfall of capitalism.

The typical traits of the first epoch are the awakening of the national movements and the drawing of the peasants, the most numerous and the most sluggish section of the population, into these movements, in connection with the struggle for political liberty in general and for national rights in particular. The typical traits of the second epoch are the absence of mass bourgeois-democratic movements, when developed capitalism, while more and more bringing together and interweaving the nations that have already been fully drawn into commercial intercourse, puts in the forefront the antagonism between internationally united capital and the international labour movement.

Of course the two epochs are not separated from each other by

a wall; they are connected by numerous transitional links, while the various countries are also distinguished by the rapidity of national development, by the national composition and distribution of the population, and so forth. It is impossible to begin drawing up the national programme of the Marxists of a given country without taking into account all these general historical and concrete state conditions.

And it is just here that we come up against the weakest point in the arguments of Rosa Luxemburg. With extraordinary zeal she embellishes her article with a collection of "strong" words against point nine of our programme, declaring it to be "sweeping," "a platitude," "a metaphysical phrase," and so on *ad infinitum*. It would be natural to expect that an author who so excellently condemns metaphysics (in the Marxian sense, *i.e.*, anti-dialectics) and empty abstractions would give us a specimen of concrete historical reasoning on the question. We are dealing with the national programme of the Marxists of a definite country—Russia, of a definite epoch—the beginning of the twentieth century. But does Rosa Luxemburg raise the question as to *what historical epoch* Russia is passing through, as to *what are the concrete peculiarities* of the national question and the national movements of that *particular* country in that *particular* epoch?

*No! She says absolutely nothing about it!* In her work you will not find even the shadow of an analysis of how the national question stands in *Russia* in the present historical epoch, and what the peculiarities of *Russia* in this particular respect are!

We are told that the national question is not the same in the Balkans as it is in Ireland, that Marx estimated the Polish and Czech national movements in the concrete conditions of 1848 in this way (a page of excerpts from Marx), that Engels estimated the struggle of the forest cantons of Switzerland against Austria and the battle of Morgarten which took place in 1315 in that way (a page of quotations from Engels with appropriate commentaries by Kautsky), that Lassalle regarded the peasant war in Germany of the sixteenth century as reactionary, etc.

It cannot be said that these remarks and quotations are remarkable for their novelty, but, at all events, it is interesting for the

reader to recall again and again precisely how Marx, Engels and Lassalle approached the analysis of concrete historical questions in individual countries. And reading over the instructive quotations from Marx and Engels one can see with particular clarity in what a ridiculous position Rosa Luxemburg has placed herself. Eloquently and angrily she preaches the need for a concrete historical analysis of the national question in various countries at various periods, but makes not the *slightest* attempt to determine through *what* historical stage in the development of capitalism *Russia* is passing at the beginning of the twentieth century, what the peculiarities of the national question in this country are. Rosa Luxemburg gives examples of how *others* treated the question in a Marxian fashion, as if she were thereby deliberately stressing how often good intentions pave the road to hell, how often good counsels cover up unwillingness or inability to make use of these counsels in practice.

Here is one of her instructive comparisons. In protesting against the slogan of the independence of Poland, Rosa Luxemburg refers to her work of 1893, in which she demonstrated the rapid "industrial development of Poland" and the sale of the latter's manufactured goods in Russia. Needless to say, no conclusion whatever can be drawn from this on the question of the *right* to self-determination; it only proves the disappearance of the old, aristocratic Poland, etc. But Rosa Luxemburg imperceptibly passes on to the conclusion that among the factors uniting Russia and Poland the purely economic factors of modern capitalist relations now prevail.

Then our Rosa passes on to the question of autonomy, and though her article is entitled "The National Question and Autonomy," *in general*, she begins to prove that the kingdom of Poland has an *exceptional* right to autonomy. (See on this question *Prosveshcheniye*, 1913, No. 12.<sup>1</sup>) In order to support the right of Poland to autonomy, Rosa Luxemburg evidently judges the state system of Russia by its economic and political and sociological characteristics and everyday life—by the totality of traits, which

<sup>1</sup> Lenin refers to his article "Critical Notes on the National Question." (See *Collected Works*, Russian ed., Vol. XVII)—Ed.

as a whole produce the concept "Asiatic despotism." (*Przegląd*,<sup>1</sup> No. 12, p. 137.)

It is common knowledge that such a state system possesses great stability in those cases where wholly patriarchal pre-capitalist traits and an insignificant development of commodity production and class differentiation predominate in the economic system. If, however, in a country where the state system is distinguished for its sharply defined pre-capitalist character, there is a nationally delimited region with a *rapidly* developing capitalism, then the more rapidly that capitalism develops, the greater the antagonism between it and the pre-capitalist state system, the more probable it is that the more progressive region—which is connected with the whole by ties that are not "modern capitalistic," but "Asiatic-despotic"—will separate from the whole.

Thus, Rosa Luxemburg has failed to complete her argument even on the question of the social structure of the government in Russia in relation to bourgeois Poland, and she does not even raise the question of the concrete historical peculiarities of the national movements in Russia.

This question we must deal with.

### III. THE CONCRETE PECULIARITIES OF THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN RUSSIA AND RUSSIA'S BOURGEOIS-DEMOCRATIC REFORMATION

"In spite of the elasticity of the principle of 'the right of nations to self-determination,' which is a mere platitude, being obviously equally applicable not only to nations inhabiting Russia, but also to nations inhabiting Germany and Austria, Switzerland and Sweden, America and Australia, we do not find it in any of the programmes of modern socialist parties. . . ." (*Przegląd*, No. 6, p. 483.)

Thus writes Rosa Luxemburg at the very beginning of her campaign against point nine of the Marxists' programme. In trying to foist on us the conception of this point in the programme as a "mere platitude" Rosa Luxemburg herself falls victim to this error, alleging with an amusing audacity that this point is "obviously equally applicable" to Russia, Germany, etc.

Obviously, we reply, Rosa Luxemburg decided to make her article a collection of errors in logic, suitable for schoolboy

<sup>1</sup> *Przegląd* (Review), the organ of the Polish Social-Democrats.—Ed. .

studies. For Rosa Luxemburg's tirade is absolute nonsense and a mockery of the historically concrete presentation of the question.

Interpreting the Marxian programme in a Marxian and not in a childish way, it is very easy to guess that it applies to bourgeois-democratic national movements. Since that is so, and it undoubtedly is so, it is "obvious" that this programme, "sweepingly," as a "platitude," etc., applies to *all* instances of bourgeois-democratic national movements. And had Rosa Luxemburg given the slightest thought to this, she would have come to the no less obvious conclusion that our programme refers *only* to cases where such a movement is actually in existence.

Had she pondered over these obvious considerations, Rosa Luxemburg would have easily perceived what nonsense she has uttered. In accusing *us* of uttering a "platitude" she uses *against us* the argument that no mention is made of the right to self-determination in the programmes of those countries where there are *no* bourgeois-democratic national movements! A remarkably clever argument!

A comparison of the political and economic development of various countries as well as of the Marxian programmes is of enormous importance from the standpoint of Marxism, for no doubt exists as to the general capitalist nature of modern states and the general law of their development. But such a comparison must be drawn in a sensible way. The elementary condition required for this is the elucidation of the question of whether the historical epochs of the development of the countries contrasted are at all *comparable*. For instance, only absolute ignoramuses (such as Prince E. Trubetskoy in *Russkaya Mysl*) are capable of "comparing" the agrarian programme of the Russian Marxists with those of Western Europe, for our programme answers the question regarding a *bourgeois-democratic* agrarian reformation whereas in the Western countries no such question exists.

The same applies to the national question. In most Western countries this question was settled long ago. It is ridiculous to seek in the programmes of Western Europe for an answer to non-existent questions. Rosa Luxemburg has lost sight of the most important thing, *viz.*, the difference between countries where the

bourgeois-democratic reformation has long been completed and those where it has not yet been completed.

This difference is the crux of the matter. The complete disregard of this difference transforms Rosa Luxemburg's exceedingly long article into a collection of empty, meaningless generalisations.

In Western, continental Europe, the period of bourgeois-democratic revolutions embraces a fairly definite period of time, approximately from 1789 to 1871. It was precisely this epoch that was the epoch of national movements and the creation of national states. After the termination of this period, Western Europe was transformed into a settled system of bourgeois states and, as a general rule, single-nation states. Therefore, to seek the right of self-determination in the programmes of West European Socialists means not understanding the A B C of Marxism.

In Eastern Europe and in Asia the period of bourgeois-democratic revolutions only started in 1905. The revolutions in Russia, Persia, Turkey and China, the wars in the Balkans, such is the chain of world events of *our* period in our "Orient." And only the blind can fail to see the awakening of a *whole series* of bourgeois-democratic national movements, strivings to create nationally independent and nationally united states in this chain of events. It is precisely and solely because Russia and the neighbouring countries are passing through this epoch that we require an item in our programme on the right of nations to self-determination.

But we will continue the quotation from Rosa Luxemburg's article a little further. She writes:

"In particular, the programme of the party which operates in a state with an extremely motley national composition and in which the national question plays a role of first-class importance—the programme of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party—does not contain the principle of the right of nations to self-determination." (*Ibid.*)

Thus, an attempt is made to convince the reader "in particular" by the example of Austria. Let us consider from a concrete historical standpoint whether this example contains much that is reasonable.

In the first place, we raise the fundamental question of the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The latter



started in Austria in 1848. and was over in 1867. Since then, for nearly half a century, there has prevailed what on the whole is an established bourgeois constitution on the basis of which a legal workers' party is legally functioning.

Therefore, in the internal conditions of the development of Austria (i.e., from the standpoint of the development of capitalism in Austria in general, and among its separate nations in particular), there are *no* factors that produce leaps, one of the concomitants of which may be the formation of nationally independent states. In assuming by her comparison that Russia in this respect is in an analogous position, Rosa Luxemburg not only makes a radically wrong, anti-historical assumption, but she involuntarily slips into liquidationism.

Secondly, the entirely different proportions of nationalities in Austria and in Russia are of particularly great importance in regard to the question with which we are concerned. Not only was Austria for a long time a state in which the Germans were predominant, but the Austrian Germans laid claim to hegemony in the German nation as a whole. This "claim," as Rosa Luxemburg (who is seemingly so averse to generalisations, platitudes, abstractions. . .) will perhaps be kind enough to remember, was defeated in the war of 1866. The German nation predominating in Austria found itself *outside the limits* of the independent German state which finally took shape in 1871. On the other hand, the attempt of the Hungarians to create an independent national state collapsed as far back as 1849, under the blows of the Russian army of serfs.

A very peculiar position was thus created: a gravitation on the part of the Hungarians and then of the Czechs, not towards separation from Austria, but, on the contrary, towards the preservation of the integrity of Austria precisely in order to preserve national independence, which could have been completely crushed by more rapacious and powerful neighbours! Owing to this peculiar position, Austria assumed the form of a double centred (dual) state, and is now being transformed into a three centre (triune) state (Germans, Hungarians, Slavs).

Is there anything like it in Russia? Is there in our country a

gravitation of "alien races" towards unity with the Great Russians under the threat of a *worse* national oppression?

It suffices to put this question to see that the comparison between Russia and Austria in the question of self-determination of nations is senseless, trivial and betrays ignorance.

The peculiar conditions of Russia in regard to the national question are just the reverse of those we have in Austria. Russia is a state with a single national centre—the Great Russian. The Great Russians occupy a gigantic uninterrupted stretch of territory and number about 70,000,000.

The peculiarity of this national state is, in the first place, that "alien races" (which, on the whole, form the majority of the entire population—57 per cent) inhabit precisely the border lands; secondly, that the oppression of these alien races is much worse than in the neighbouring states (and not in the European states alone); thirdly, that in a number of cases the oppressed nationalities inhabiting the border lands have compatriots across the border who enjoy greater national independence (suffice it to recall the Finns, the Swedes, the Poles, the Ukrainians, the Rumanians along the western and southern frontiers of the state); fourthly, the development of capitalism and the general level of culture are not infrequently higher in the border lands inhabited by "alien races" than in the centre of the state. Finally, it is precisely in the neighbouring Asiatic states that we observe incipient bourgeois revolutions and national movements, which partly affect the kindred nationalities within the borders of Russia.

Thus, it is precisely the concrete historical peculiarities of the national question in Russia that cause the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination in the present epoch to become a matter of special urgency in our country.

Incidentally, even from the purely factual aspect, Rosa Luxemburg's assertion that the programme of the Austrian Social-Democrats does not contain the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination is incorrect. We need only open the minutes of the Brünn Congress, which adopted the national programme, and we shall see there the statement by the Ruthenian Social-Democrat Hankevicz on behalf of the entire Ukrainian (Ruthen-

ian) delegation (p. 85 of the minutes), and by the Polish Social-Democrat Reger on behalf of the entire Polish delegation (p. 108), to the effect that the Austrian Social-Democrats of both the above-mentioned nations strive, among other things, for national unity, for the freedom and independence of their nations. Therefore Austrian Social-Democracy without including the right of nations to self-determination directly in its programme is, nevertheless, quite reconciled to the demand for national independence being put forward by *sections* of the Party. In reality this means, of course, the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination! Thus Rosa Luxemburg's reference to Austria speaks *against* Rosa Luxemburg in *all* respects.

#### IV. "PRACTICALNESS" IN THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The opportunists were particularly zealous in taking up Rosa Luxemburg's argument that point nine of our programme does not contain anything "practical." Rosa Luxemburg is so delighted with this argument that sometimes in her article the following "slogan" is repeated eight times on a single page.

She writes:

"Point nine does not contain any practical indication for the day-to-day policy of the proletariat, or any practical solution of the national problems."

Let us examine this argument, which is also formulated in a way that implies that point nine either means nothing, or else pledges us to support all national aspirations.

What is the meaning of the demand for "practicalness" in the national question?

Either the support of all national aspirations; or the answer "yes" or "no" to the question of the secession of each nation; or generally, the immediate "possibility of achieving" the national demands.

Let us consider all these three possible meanings of the demand for "practicalness."

The bourgeoisie, which naturally exercises hegemony (leadership) in the beginning of every national movement, calls the support of all the national aspirations a practical matter. But the

policy of the proletariat in the national question (as in other questions) supports the bourgeoisie only in a definite direction; it never coincides with the policy of the bourgeoisie. The working class supports the bourgeoisie only for the sake of national peace (which the bourgeoisie cannot give to the full extent and which can be achieved only in so far as there is *complete* democratisation), for the sake of equal rights, for the sake of creating better conditions for the class struggle. Therefore it is precisely *against the practicalness* of the bourgeoisie that the proletarians advance their *principles* in the national question, and always give the bourgeoisie *only conditional* support. In matters of nationality the bourgeoisie of every country wants either privileges for its *own* nation, or exceptional advantages for it; this is called "practical." The proletariat is opposed to all privileges, to all exceptions. To demand "practicalness" of it means dragging it in the wake of the bourgeoisie, falling into opportunism.

The demand for an answer "yes" or "no" to the question of the separation of each nation seems to be a very "practical" demand. In reality it is absurd; it is metaphysical in theory, and in practice it leads to the proletariat's subordinating itself to the policy of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie always places its national demands in the forefront. It advances them unconditionally. For the proletariat, however, these demands are subordinated to the interests of the class struggle. Theoretically, it is impossible to vouch beforehand whether the separation of a given nation from, or its equality with, another nation will complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution; *in either case*, it is important for the proletariat to ensure the development of its class; for the bourgeoisie, it is important that this development be hampered and that the tasks of the proletariat be forced into the background by the tasks of "its own" nation. That is why the proletariat confines itself, so to say, to the negative demand of recognising the right to self-determination, without guaranteeing anything to any nation, without undertaking to give *anything at the expense* of another nation.

This may be "impractical," but in reality it is the best guarantee for the most democratic of all possible solutions; the proletariat needs *only* these guarantees, whereas the bourgeoisie of

every nation requires guarantees for *its own* interests, irrespective of the position of (or the possible disadvantages to) other nations.

The bourgeoisie is most interested in the "possibility of achieving" the given demand—hence the perennial policy of bargains with the bourgeoisie of other nations to the detriment of the proletariat. For the proletariat, however, the important thing is to strengthen its class against the bourgeoisie, to train the masses in the spirit of consistent democracy and socialism.

The opportunists may think this "impractical," but it is the only real guarantee of a maximum of equality, of national rights and of peace, in spite of the feudal landlords and the *nationalist* bourgeoisie.

The whole task of the proletarians in the national question is "impractical" from the standpoint of the *nationalist* bourgeoisie of every nation, because the proletarians demand "abstract" equal rights; being opposed to all nationalism, they demand that there shall not be, on principle, the slightest privilege. In her failure to grasp this, by her unwise eulogy of practicalness, Rosa Luxemburg opened the gate wide precisely for the opportunists, and especially for opportunist concessions to Great Russian nationalism.

Why Great Russian? Because the Great Russians in Russia are an oppressing nation, and on the national question, opportunism will naturally express itself differently among the oppressed nations from the way it will express itself among the oppressing nations.

The bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations will call upon the proletariat to support its aspirations unconditionally for the sake of the "practicalness" of its demands. It would be more practical to say a plain "yes" in favour of the separation of *this or that* nation, rather than in favour of the *right* of separation for all and sundry nations!

The proletariat is opposed to such practicalness; recognising equality of rights and an equal right to a national state, it values most the alliance of the proletarians of all nations, and evaluates every national demand, every national separation *from the angle* of the class struggle of the workers. The slogan of practicalness

is in fact only a slogan of non-critically adopting bourgeois aspirations.

We are told: by supporting the right to secession you are supporting the bourgeois nationalism of the oppressed nations. This is what Rosa Luxemburg says, and it is repeated after her by Semkovsky, the opportunist, who, by the way, is the only representative of liquidationist ideas on this question in a liquidationist newspaper!

Our reply to this is: no, a "practical" solution is important precisely for the bourgeoisie; for the workers it is the theoretical singling out of the *principles* of two tendencies that is important. *To the extent* that the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation struggles against the oppressing one, *to that extent*, we are always, in every case, and more resolutely than anyone else, *for* it, because we are the staunchest and the most consistent enemies of oppression. In so far as the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation stands for its own bourgeois nationalism we are against it. A struggle against the privileges and violence of the oppressing nation and no toleration of the strivings for privileges on the part of the oppressed nation.

Unless we in our agitation advance and carry out the slogan of the *right* to secession we shall play into the hands, not only of the bourgeoisie, but also of the feudal landlords and of the absolutism of the *oppressing* nation. Kautsky long ago advanced this argument against Rosa Luxemburg and the argument is indisputable. In her anxiety not to "assist" the nationalistic bourgeoisie of Poland, Rosa Luxemburg by her denial of the *right* to secession in the programme of the *Russian* Marxists, is *in fact* assisting the Great Russian Black Hundreds; she is, in fact, assisting opportunist reconciliation with the privileges (and worse than privileges) of the Great Russians.

Carried away by the struggle against nationalism in Poland, Rosa Luxemburg has forgotten the nationalism of the Great Russians although *this latter* nationalism is the most formidable at the present time; it is precisely the one that is less bourgeois and more feudal, and it is precisely the one that acts as the principal brake on democracy and the proletarian struggle. The bourgeois

nationalism of *every* oppressed nation has a general democratic content which is directed *against* oppression, and it is this content that we *absolutely* support, strictly distinguishing it from the tendency towards one's own national exclusiveness, fighting against the tendency of the Polish bourgeois to oppress the Jews, etc., etc.

This is "impractical" from the standpoint of a bourgeois and a philistine. But it is the only policy in the national question that is practical, that is based on principles and that really helps democracy, liberty and proletarian alliance.

The recognition of the right to secession for all; the appraisal of each concrete question of secession from the point of view of removing all inequality in rights, all privileges, all exceptionalism.

Let us examine the position of an oppressing nation. Can a nation be free if it oppresses other nations? It cannot. The interests of the freedom of the Great Russian population<sup>1</sup> demand a struggle against such oppression. The long, age-long history of the suppression of the movements of the oppressed nations, the systematic propaganda in favour of such suppression on the part of the "upper" classes, created enormous obstacles to the cause of freedom of the Great Russian people itself, in the form of prejudices, etc.

The Great Russian Black Hundreds deliberately foster and fan these prejudices. The Great Russian bourgeoisie tolerates them or panders to them. The Great Russian proletariat cannot achieve *its* aims, cannot clear the road to freedom for itself without systematically combating these prejudices.

In Russia, the creation of an independent national state so far remains the privilege of one nation, the Great Russian nation. We, the Great Russian proletarians, defend no privileges, and we do not defend this privilege. We fight on the basis of the given state, unite the workers of all nations in the given state, we can-

<sup>1</sup> This word appears un-Marxian to a certain L. VI. in Paris. This L. VI. is amusingly "*superklug*" (over-clever). This "over-clever" L. VI. apparently proposes to write an essay on the deletion from our minimum programme (from the point of view of the class struggle!) of the words "population," "people," etc.

not vouch for this or that path of national development, we advance to our class goal by *all* possible paths.

But we cannot advance to that goal without fighting all nationalism, without fighting for the equality of the workers of all nations. A thousand factors which cannot be foreseen will determine whether the Ukraine, for example, is destined to form an independent state. And without attempting idle "*guesses*," we firmly uphold what is beyond doubt: the right of the Ukraine to form such a state. We respect this right, we do not uphold the privileges of the Great Russians over the Ukrainians, we *teach* the masses to recognize that right, and to reject the *state* privileges of any nation.

In the leaps which all nations took in the epoch of bourgeois revolutions, clashes and struggle over the right to a national state are possible and probable. We proletarians declare ourselves in advance to be *opposed* to Great Russian privileges, and this is what guides our entire propaganda and agitation.

In her quest for "practicalness" Rosa Luxemburg has overlooked the *principal* practical task both of the Great Russian proletariat and of the proletariat of other nationalities; the task of everyday agitation and propaganda against all state and national privileges, for the right, the equal right of all nations to their national state. This task is (at present) our principal task in the national question, for only in this way can we defend the interests of democracy and of the alliance of all proletarians of all nations based on equal rights.

This propaganda may be "impractical" from the point of view of the Great Russian oppressors as well as from the point of view of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations (both demand a *definite* "yes" or "no," and accuse the Social-Democrats of being "vague"). In reality, it is precisely this propaganda, and only this propaganda, that ensures the really democratic, the really socialist education of the masses. Only such propaganda ensures the maximum chances of national peace in Russia, should she remain a heterogeneous nation state; only such propaganda ensures the most peaceful (and for the proletarian class struggle, harmless)



division into the various national states, should the question of such division arise.

In order to explain this policy, the only proletarian policy in the national question, more concretely, we shall examine the attitude of Great Russian liberalism towards "self-determination of nations" and quote the example of the secession of Norway from Sweden.

## VII. THE RESOLUTION OF THE LONDON INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS, 1896

This resolution reads:

"The Congress declares that it upholds the full right of self-determination of all nations and expresses its sympathy for the workers of every country now suffering under the yoke of military, national or other despotism; the Congress calls on the workers of all these countries to join the ranks of the class conscious workers of the whole world in order to fight together with them for the defeat of international capitalism and for the achievement of the aims of international Social-Democracy."<sup>1</sup>

As we have already pointed out, our opportunists, Messrs. Semkovsky, Liebmann and Yurkevich simply do not know of this decision. But Rosa Luxemburg knows it and quotes its full text, which contains the same expression as that contained in our programme, "self-determination."

The question is, how does Rosa Luxemburg remove this obstacle which lies in the path of her "original" theory?

Oh, quite simply: . . . the whole weight is in the second part of the resolution . . . its declaratory character . . . one would refer to it only under a misapprehension!!

The helplessness and perplexity of our author are simply astounding. Usually, only the opportunists argue that the consistent democratic and socialist points in the programme are merely declarations, while, in a cowardly fashion, they avoid entering into an open debate upon these points. Not without reason, apparently, has Rosa Luxemburg found herself this time in the

<sup>1</sup> See the official German report of the London Congress: *Verhandlungen und Beschlüsse des internationalen sozialistischen Arbeiter- und Gewerkschaftskongresses zu London, vom 27. Juli bis 1. August 1896*, Berlin, 1897, S. 18.

deplorable company of Messrs. Semkovsky, Liebmann and Yurkevich. Rosa Luxemburg does not venture to declare openly whether she regards the above resolution as correct or erroneous. She wriggles and twists as if counting on the inattentive or ill-informed reader who forgets the first part of the resolution by the time he has started reading the second, or on one who has never heard of the discussions that took place in the Socialist press *prior to the London Congress*.

However, Rosa Luxemburg is greatly mistaken if she imagines that she will be able so easily, before the class conscious workers of Russia, to trample upon the resolution of the International on such an important question of principle without even deigning to analyse it critically.

Rosa Luxemburg's point of view was voiced during the discussions which took place prior to the London Congress, mainly in the columns of the organ of the German Marxists, *Die Neue Zeit*, and this *point of view virtually suffered defeat at the International!* That is the crux of the matter, which the Russian reader particularly must bear in mind.

The debates turned on the question of the independence of Poland. Three points of view were advanced:

1. The point of view of the "*fraki*."<sup>1</sup> Hecker spoke on their behalf. They wanted the International to include in *its* programme the demand for the independence of Poland. This proposal was not accepted. This point of view was rejected by the International.

2. Rosa Luxemburg's point of view. The Polish Socialists must not demand the independence of Poland. From this point of view there could be no question of proclaiming the right of nations to self-determination. This point of view was likewise rejected by the International.

3. The point of view which was then most thoroughly expounded by Kautsky in opposing Rosa Luxemburg, when he proved the extreme "one-sidedness" of her materialism. From this point of view the International cannot, at the present time, make

<sup>1</sup> The Right wing of the Polish Socialist Party.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

he independence of Poland a point in its programme; but the Polish Socialists—said Kautsky—are fully entitled to advance such a demand. From the point of view of the Socialists, it is absolutely a mistake to ignore the tasks of national liberation in a situation of national oppression.

The resolution of the International reproduces the most essential, fundamental propositions of this point of view: on the one hand, the absolutely direct, unambiguous recognition of the full right of all nations to self-determination; on the other hand, the equally unambiguous appeal to the workers for *international* unity in their class struggle.

We believe that this resolution is quite correct and that for the countries of Eastern Europe and Asia in the beginning of the twentieth century it is precisely this resolution, in both its parts taken as an inseparable whole, that gives the only correct lead to the proletarian class policy in the national question.

We will deal in somewhat greater detail with the three above-mentioned points of view.

It is well known that Karl Marx and Frederick Engels considered that the bounden duty of the whole of West European democracy, and still more of Social-Democracy, was to support actively the demand for the independence of Poland. For the period of the forties and sixties of last century, the period of the bourgeois revolutions in Austria and Germany, and the period of the "Peasant Reform"<sup>1</sup> in Russia, this point of view was quite correct and the only consistently democratic and proletarian point of view. As long as the masses of the people in Russia and in most Slavic countries were still dormant, as long as *there were no* independent, mass, democratic movements in these countries, the *aristocratic*<sup>2</sup> liberation movement in Poland assumed enormous, paramount importance from the point of view, not only of all-

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, the emancipation of the serfs.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> In the original text "*szlachta*," *i.e.*, the Polish word for the landed nobility.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

Russian, not only of all-Slavic, but also of all-European democracy.<sup>1</sup>

But while this standpoint of Marx was correct for the sixties, or for the third quarter of the nineteenth century, it ceased to be correct in the twentieth century. Independent democratic movements, and even an independent proletarian movement, have arisen in most Slavic countries, even in one of the most backward Slavic countries, in Russia. *Szlachta* Poland has disappeared, yielding place to capitalist Poland. Under such circumstances Poland could not but lose its *exceptional* revolutionary importance.

The attempt of the Polish Socialist Party (the present-day "*fraki*") in 1896 to "fix" for all time the point of view Marx held in a *different epoch* was an attempt to use the *letter* of Marxism against the *spirit* of Marxism. Therefore, the Polish Social-Democrats were quiet right when they attacked the nationalistic infatuation of the Polish petty bourgeoisie and pointed out that the national question was of secondary importance for Polish workers, when they for the first time created a purely proletarian party in Poland, and proclaimed the very important principle that the Polish and Russian workers must maintain the closest alliance in their class struggle.

But did this mean that in the beginning of the twentieth century the International could regard the principle of political self-determination of nations, or their right to secession, as being superfluous for Eastern Europe and for Asia? This would be the height of absurdity, which would (theoretically) be tantamount to admitting that the bourgeois-democratic transformation of

<sup>1</sup> It would be a very interesting piece of historical work to compare the position of a Polish aristocrat-rebel in 1863 with the position of the Russian democrat-revolutionary, Chernyshevsky, who also (like Marx) knew how to appraise the importance of the Polish movement, and with the position of the Ukrainian petty-bourgeois Dragomanov, who appeared much later and expressed the point of view of a peasant, so ignorant, sleepy and grown fast to his dung-heap, that owing to his legitimate hatred of the Polish *pan* [lord—*Ed. Eng. ed.*] he was unable to understand the significance of the struggle of these *pans* for all-Russian democracy. (See *Historical Poland and All-Russian Democracy* by Dragomanov.) Dragomanov richly deserved the fervent kisses which were subsequently bestowed on him by Mr. P. B. Struve, who by that time had become a national-liberal.

the Turkish, Russian and Chinese states has been completed, tantamount (in effect) to opportunism towards absolutism,

No. During the period of incipient bourgeois-democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe and Asia, during the period of the awakening and intensification of national movements, during the period of formation of independent proletarian parties, the task of these parties in connection with national policy must be twofold: the recognition of the right to self-determination for all nations, because the bourgeois-democratic transformation is not yet complete, because labour democracy consistently, seriously and sincerely, not in a liberal, Kokoshkin fashion, fights for equal rights for nations —and the closest, inseparable alliance in the class struggle of the proletarians of all nations in a given state, throughout all the vicissitudes of its history, irrespective of any reshaping of the frontiers of the individual states by the bourgeoisie.

The resolution of the International of 1896 formulates precisely this twofold task of the proletariat. And this is the substance, the basic principle of the resolution of the Summer Conference of Russian Marxists held in 1913. There are people who see a “contradiction” in the fact that point four of this resolution which recognises the right to self-determination, to secession, seems to “concede” the maximum to nationalism (in reality the recognition of the *right* of *all* nations to self-determination implies the recognition of the maximum of *democracy* and the minimum of nationalism), while point five warns the workers against the nationalistic slogans of the bourgeoisie of any nation and demands the unity and fusion of the workers of all nations into internationally united proletarian organisations. But only extremely shallow minds, which cannot grasp, for instance, why the unity and class solidarity of the Swedish and the Norwegian proletariat were *strengthened* when the Swedish workers upheld Norway’s freedom to secede and form an independent state, can see any “contradiction” in this.

### VIII. KARL MARX THE UTOPIAN AND ROSA LUXEMBURG THE PRACTICAL

While declaring the independence of Poland to be a utopia and repeating it *ad nauseam*, Rosa Luxemburg exclaims ironically: why not raise the demand for the independence of Ireland?

It is obvious that the "practical" Rosa Luxemburg is unaware of Karl Marx's attitude to the question of the independence of Ireland. It is worth while dwelling upon this, in order to give an analysis of a *concrete* demand for national independence from a really Marxian and not an opportunist standpoint.

Marx had a habit of "probing the teeth," as he expressed himself, of his Socialist acquaintances, testing their intelligence and force of convictions. Having made the acquaintance of Lopatin, Marx wrote to Engels on July 15, 1870, and expressed a highly flattering opinion of the young Russian Socialist, but added, at the same time:

"... *Poland* is his weak point. On this point he speaks quite like an Englishman—say an English Chartist of the old school—about Ireland."

Marx asks a Socialist belonging to an oppressing nation about his attitude to the oppressed nation and he at once reveals the defect *common* to the Socialists of the dominant nations (the British and the Russian): they fail to understand their Socialist duties towards the downtrodden nations, they echo prejudices borrowed from the bourgeoisie of the "Great Powers."

Before passing on to the positive declarations of Marx on Ireland it must be pointed out that in general the attitude of Marx and Engels to the national question was strictly critical, and they recognised its historical relativity. Thus, Engels wrote to Marx on May 23, 1851, that the study of history was leading him to pessimistic conclusions concerning Poland, that the importance of Poland was temporary, that it would last only until the agrarian revolution in Russia. The role of the Poles in history was one of "brave, quarrelsome stupidity."

"And one cannot point to a single instance in which Poland represented progress successfully, even if only in relation to Russia, or did anything at all of historic importance." Russia contains more elements of civilisation, education, industry and of the bourgeoisie than the "Poles whose nature is

that of the idle cavalier. . . . What are Warsaw and Cracow, compared to St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, etc.!"

Engels had no faith in the success of an insurrection of the Polish aristocracy.

But all these thoughts, so full of genius and penetration, by no means prevented Engels and Marx from treating the Polish movement with the most profound and ardent sympathy twelve years afterwards, when Russia was still asleep and Poland was seething.

When drafting the Address of the International in 1864, Marx wrote to Engels (on November 4, 1864) that he had to combat the nationalism of Mazzini and went on to say :

"In so far as international politics come into the Address I speak of countries, not nationalities, and denounce Russia, not the *minores gentium*."<sup>1</sup>

Marx had no doubt as to the subordinate position of the national question as compared with the "labour question." But his theory is as far from ignoring the national question as heaven from earth.

1866 arrives. Marx writes to Engels about the "Proudhonist clique" in Paris, which

"... declares nationalities to be an absurdity and attacks Bismarck and Garibaldi, etc. As polemics against chauvinism their tactics are useful and explainable. But when the believers in Proudhon (my good friends here, Lafargue and Longuet, also belong to them) think that all Europe can and should sit quietly and peacefully on its behind until the gentlemen from France abolish *la misère et l'ignorance* ... they become ridiculous." (Letter of June 7, 1866.)

"Yesterday," Marx writes on June 20, 1866, "there was a discussion in the International Council<sup>2</sup> on the present war. . . . The discussion wound up, as was to be expected, with the question of 'nationality' in general and the attitude we should take towards it. . . . The representatives of 'Young France' (*non-workers*) came out with the argument that all nationalities and even nations were 'antiquated prejudices.' Proudhonised Stirnerism. . . . The whole world waits until the French are ripe for a social revolution. . . . The English laughed very much when I began my speech by saying that our friend Lafargue, etc., who had done away with nationalities, had spoken 'French' to us, i.e., a language which nine-tenths of the audience did not understand. I also suggested that by the negation of nationalities he appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption into the model French nation."

<sup>1</sup> The small nations.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The Council of the First International of which Marx was leader.—*Ed.*

The conclusion that follows from all these critical remarks of Marx is clear: the working class should be the last to make a fetish of the national question, since the development of capitalism does not necessarily awaken *all* nations to independent life. But to brush aside the mass national movements once they have started and to refuse to support what is progressive in them means, in effect, pandering to *nationalistic* prejudices, *viz.*, recognising "one's own as the model nation" (or, we will add on our part, as the nation possessing the exclusive privilege of forming a state).<sup>1</sup>

But let us return to the question of Ireland.

Marx's position on this question is most clearly expressed in the following extracts from his letters:

"I have done my best to bring about this demonstration of the British workers in favour of Fenianism. . . . I used to consider the separation of Ireland from England impossible. I now think it inevitable, although after the separation there may come *federation*."

This is what Marx wrote to Engels on November 2, 1867.

In his letter of November 30 of the same year, he added:

". . . what shall *we* advise the *English* workers? In my opinion they must make the *repeal of the Union*" [*i.e.*, the separation of Ireland from Great Britain] "(in short, the affair of 1783, only democratised and adapted to the conditions of the time) into an article of their *pronunziamento*. This is the only *legal* and therefore only possible form of Irish emancipation which can be admitted in the programme of an *English* party. Experience must show later whether a purely personal union can continue to subsist between the two countries. . . .

"What the Irish need is:

"1) Self-government and independence from England;

"2) An agrarian revolution. . . ."

Marx attached great importance to the question of Ireland and he delivered lectures of one and a half hours' duration at the German Workers' Union on this subject (letter of December 17, 1867).

Engels notes in a letter of November 20, 1868, "the hatred for the Irish on the part of the British workers," and almost a year afterwards (October 24, 1869), returning to this question he writes:

<sup>1</sup> Compare also Marx's letter to Engels of June 3, 1867: ". . . I have learned with real pleasure from the Paris letters to the *Times* about the pro-Polish sentiments of the Parisians as against Russia. . . . Proudhon and his little doctrinaire clique are not the French people."



"*Il n'y a qu'un pas*" (it is only one step) "from Ireland to Russia. . . ." The example of "Irish history shows one how disastrous it is for a nation when it has subjugated another nation. All the abominations of the English have their origin in the Irish Pale. I have still to work through (*ochsen*) the Cromwellian period, but this much seems certain to me, that things would have taken another turn in England but for the necessity in Ireland of military rule and the creation of a new aristocracy."

Let us note, by the way, Marx's letter to Engels of August 18, 1869:

"In Posen . . . the Polish workers . . . have brought a strike to a victorious end by the help of their colleagues in Berlin. This struggle against Monsieur le Capital—even in the subordinate form of the strike—is a very different way of getting rid of national prejudices from that of the bourgeois gentlemen with their peace declamations."

The policy on the Irish question pursued by Marx in the International may be seen from the following:

On November 18, 1869, Marx writes to Engels that he spoke for one and a quarter hours in the Council of the International on the question of the attitude of the British Ministry to the Irish amnesty and proposed the following resolution:

"Resolved,

"that in his reply to the Irish demands for the release of the imprisoned Irish patriots—a reply contained in his letter to Mr. O'Shea, etc.—Mr. Gladstone deliberately insults the Irish nation;

"that he clogs political amnesty with conditions alike degrading to the victims of misgovernment and the people they belong to;

"that having, in the teeth of his responsible position, publicly and enthusiastically cheered on the American slaveholders' rebellion, he now steps in to preach to the Irish people the doctrine of passive obedience;

"that his whole proceedings with reference to the Irish amnesty question are the true and genuine product of that 'policy of conquest,' by the fiery denunciation of which Mr. Gladstone ousted his Tory rivals from office;

"that the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association express their admiration of the spirited, firm and high-souled manner in which the Irish people carry on their amnesty movement;

"that these resolutions be communicated to all branches of and workingmen's bodies connected with the International Workingmen's Association in Europe and America."

On December 10, 1869, Marx writes that his paper on the Irish question to be read at the Council of the International will be framed on the following lines:

" . . . quite apart from all phrases about 'international' and 'humane' justice for Ireland—which are to be taken for granted in the *International*

*Council—it is in the direct and absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connection with Ireland. And this is my most complete conviction, and for reasons which in part I cannot tell the English workers themselves. For a long time I believed that it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English working class ascendancy. I always expressed this point of view in The New York Tribune [an American journal to which Marx contributed]. Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will never accomplish anything before it has got rid of Ireland. . . . English reaction in England had its roots . . . in the subjugation of Ireland.”* (Marx’s italics.)

The policy of Marx on the Irish question should now be quite clear to the readers.

Marx, the “utopian,” was so “impractical” that he stood for the separation of Ireland, which has not been realised even half a century afterwards.

What gave rise to this policy of Marx, and was it not a mistake? In the beginning, Marx thought that it was not the national movement of the oppressed nation, but the labour movement of the oppressing nation that would liberate Ireland. Marx does not make an absolute of the national movement, knowing, as he does, that the victory of the working class alone can bring about the complete liberation of all nationalities. It is impossible to estimate beforehand all the possible correlations between the bourgeois liberation movements of the oppressed nations and the proletarian emancipation movement of the oppressing nation (the very problem which today makes the national question so difficult in Russia).

However, matters turned out so that the British working class fell under the influence of the Liberals for a fairly long time, became their appendage and by adopting a liberal-labour policy beheaded itself. The bourgeois movement of emancipation in Ireland grew stronger and assumed revolutionary forms. Marx reconsidered his view and corrected it. “How disastrous it is for a nation when it has subjugated another nation.” The working class of Great Britain will never be free until Ireland is liberated from the British yoke. Reaction in Great Britain is strengthened and fed by the enslavement of Ireland (just as reaction in Russia is fed by the latter’s enslavement of a number of nations!).

And Marx, in proposing in the International a resolution of sympathy with the "Irish nation" and the "Irish people" (the clever L.VI. would probably have rated poor Marx for forgetting about the class struggle!), preaches the *separation* of Ireland from Great Britain, "although after the separation there may come federation."

What are the theoretical grounds for this conclusion of Marx? In Great Britain the bourgeois revolution was completed long ago. But it has not yet been completed in Ireland; it is being completed now, after the lapse of half a century, by the reforms of the British Liberals. If capitalism in Great Britain had been overthrown as quickly as Marx at first expected, there would have been no place for a bourgeois-democratic and general national movement in Ireland. But since it arose, Marx advised the British workers to support it, to give it a revolutionary impetus and lead it to a final issue in the interests of *their own* liberty.

The economic ties between Ireland and England in the sixties of last century were of course even closer than the ties of Russia with Poland, the Ukraine, etc. The "impracticability" and "impossibility of realising" the separation of Ireland (if only owing to geographical conditions and the immense colonial power of Great Britain) were quite obvious. While, in principle, an enemy of federalism, Marx in this instance agrees also to federation,<sup>1</sup> *so long as* the emancipation of Ireland is achieved in a revolutionary and not in a reformist way, through the movement of the mass of the people of Ireland supported by the working class of England. There can be no doubt that only such a solution of the historical problem would be in the best interests of the proletariat and of rapid social development.

<sup>1</sup> By the way, it is not difficult to see why, from a Social-Democratic point of view, *neither* federation *nor* autonomy is to be implied by the right of "self-determination." (Although, speaking in the abstract, the one and the other come under self-determination.) The right to federation is, in general, an absurdity, since federation is a two-sided contract. It goes without saying that Marxists cannot place the defence of federalism in general in their programme. As far as autonomy is concerned, Marxists defend not the right to autonomy but autonomy *itself*, as a general, universal principle of a democratic state with a mixed national composition, with sharp differences in the geographical and other conditions. Consequently, the recognition of the "right of nations to autonomy" is as absurd as the "right of nations to federation."

It turned out differently. Both the Irish people and the British proletariat proved weak. Only now, through the miserable deals between the English Liberals and the Irish bourgeoisie, is the Irish problem being solved (the example of Ulster shows with what difficulty) through the land reform (with compensation) and autonomy (not introduced so far). Well then? Does it follow that Marx and Engels were "utopians," that they put forward national demands impossible of realisation, that they allowed themselves to be influenced by the Irish petty-bourgeois nationalists (there is no doubt about the petty-bourgeois nature of the Fenians), etc?

No. Marx and Engels pursued also in the Irish question a consistently proletarian policy, which really educated the masses in the spirit of democracy and socialism. Only such a policy could have saved both Ireland and England from half a century of delay in the introduction of the necessary reforms and from the mutilation of those reforms by the Liberals to please the reactionaries.

The policy of Marx and Engels in the Irish question serves as a splendid example (an example which retains its tremendous *practical* importance up to the present time) of the attitude which the proletariat of the oppressing nations should adopt towards national movements. It serves as a warning against that "servile haste" with which the philistines of all countries, colours and languages hurry to declare "utopian" any changes in the frontiers of states established by the violence and privileges of the landlords and bourgeoisie of one nation.

If the Irish and British proletariat had not accepted the policy of Marx and had not put forward the slogan of the separation of Ireland—that would have been the worst opportunism on their part, forgetfulness of their tasks as democrats and Socialists, a concession to *British* reaction and to the *British* bourgeoisie.

#### IX. THE 1903 PROGRAMME AND ITS LIQUIDATORS

The minutes of the congress of 1903, which adopted the programme of the Russian Marxists, have become a great rarity, and the overwhelming majority of the active workers in the labour movement of today are unacquainted with the motives underlying

the various points of the programme (the more so since not all the literature relevant thereto enjoys the blessings of legality...). Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the debate on the question which interests us and which was raised at the Congress of 1903.

Let us state first of all that however meagre the Russian Social-Democratic literature on the "right of nations to self-determination" may be, it clearly shows that this right was always understood to mean the right to secession. Messieurs the Semkovskys, Liebmanns and Yurkeviches, who doubt this, who declare that point nine is "not clear," etc., do so only because of their extreme ignorance or carelessness. As far back as 1902, Plekhanov, in *Zarya*, defending "the right to self-determination" in the draft programme, wrote that this demand, which is not obligatory for the bourgeois democrats, is "*obligatory* for the Social-Democrats."

"If we were to forget or hesitate to advance it," wrote Plekhanov, "for fear of offending the national prejudices of the present generation of the Great Russians, the call . . . 'workers of all countries, unite!' on our lips would become a shameful lie. . ."

This is a very apt characterisation of the basic argument in favour of the point under consideration, so apt that it is not surprising that the critics of our programme "who would not own their kith and kin" timidly avoided it. The renunciation of this point, no matter for what motives, means *in reality* a "shameful" concession to Great Russian nationalism. But why Great Russian, when it is a question of the right of *all* nations to self-determination? Because it refers to secession *from* the Great Russians. The interests of the *unity of the proletarians*, the interests of their class solidarity demand the recognition of the right of *nations* to *secession*—that is what Plekhanov admitted in these words fourteen years ago; had our opportunists pondered over this they would probably not have talked so much nonsense about self-determination.

At the congress of 1903, which adopted the draft programme that Plekhanov advocated, the main work was done in the *Programme Commission*. Unfortunately no minutes were taken; they would have been particularly interesting on this point, for it was *only* in the Commission that the representatives of the Polish

Social-Democrats, Warszawski and Hanecki, tried to defend their view and dispute the "recognition of the right to self-determination." The reader who took the trouble to compare their arguments (expounded in the speech by Warszawski and in his and Hanecki's declaration, pp. 134-36 and 388-90 of the minutes<sup>1</sup>) with those Rosa Luxemburg advanced in her Polish article, which we have analysed, would find that they are quite identical.

How were these arguments treated by the Programme Commission of the Second Congress, where Plekhanov more than anyone else attacked the Polish Marxists? These arguments were mercilessly ridiculed! The absurdity of proposing to the *Russian Marxists* that they delete the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination was demonstrated so clearly and graphically that the Polish Marxists *did not even venture to repeat their arguments at the plenary meeting of the congress!!* Having become convinced of the hopelessness of their case at the supreme assembly of Great Russian, Jewish, Georgian and Armenian Marxists, they left the congress.

This historic episode is naturally of very great importance for everyone who is seriously interested in *his* programme. The fact that the arguments of the Polish Marxists suffered utter defeat in the Programme Commission of the congress and that the Polish Marxists gave up the attempt to defend their views at the meeting of the congress—is very significant. It is not without reason that Rosa Luxemburg "modestly" kept silent about it in her article in 1908—apparently the recollection of the congress was too unpleasant! She also kept quiet about the ridiculously unfortunate proposal made by Warszawski and Hanecki in 1903, on behalf of all the Polish Marxists, to "correct" point nine of the programme, a proposal which neither Rosa Luxemburg nor the other Polish Social-Democrats ventured (or will venture) to repeat.

But although Rosa Luxemburg, concealing her defeat in 1903, kept quiet about these facts, those who take an interest in the history of their Party will take pains to ascertain the facts and ponder over their significance.

<sup>1</sup> The Minutes of the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.—*Ed.*

The friends of Rosa Luxemburg, on leaving the congress in 1903, wrote to it as follows:

"... We propose that point 7" (now point 9) "of the draft programme read as follows: Point 7: *Institutions guaranteeing full freedom of cultural development to all nations incorporated in the state.*" (P. 390 of the Minutes.)

Thus, the Polish Marxists then propounded views on the national question which were so vague that *instead* of self-determination they actually proposed the notorious "cultural-national autonomy," under another name.

This sounds almost incredible, but unfortunately it is a fact. At the congress itself, although it was attended by five Bundists with five votes, and three Caucasians with six votes, not counting Kostrov's consultative vote, not a *single* voice was raised for the *deletion* of the point about self-determination. Three votes were cast for adding to this point "cultural-national autonomy" (in favour of Goldblatt's formula, "the creation of institutions guaranteeing to the nations complete freedom of cultural development") and four votes for Lieber's formula ("the right of nations to freedom in their cultural development").

Now that a Russian liberal party, the party of the Cadets, has appeared on the scene we know that in *its* programme the political self-determination of nations has been replaced by "cultural self-determination." Thus, in "*combating*" the nationalism of the Polish Socialist Party, the Polish friends of Rosa Luxemburg were so successful that they proposed to substitute a *liberal* programme for the Marxian programme! And in the same breath they accused our programme of being opportunist—no wonder this accusation was received with laughter by the Programme Commission of the Second Congress!

How was "self-determination" understood by the delegates at the Second Congress, of whom, as we have seen, *not a single one* was opposed to "self-determination of nations"?

The following three extracts from the minutes provide the answer:

"*Martynov* is of the opinion that the term 'self-determination' must not be given a broad interpretation; it merely means the right of a nation to set

itself up as a separate political entity, and not regional self-government." (P. 171.)

Martynov was a member of the Programme Commission in which the arguments of the friends of Rosa Luxemburg were refuted and ridiculed. In his views Martynov was then an "Economist," a rabid opponent of *Iskra*, and had he expressed an opinion which was not shared by the majority of the Programme Commission he certainly would have been repudiated.

Goldblatt, a Bundist, was the first to speak when the congress, after the commission had finished its work, discussed point eight (present point nine) of the programme.

Goldblatt said:

"Nothing can be said against the 'right to self-determination.' When a nation is fighting for independence, it should not be opposed. If Poland does not want to enter into legal marriage with Russia, it should not be compelled to, as Plekhanov put it. I agree with this opinion within these limits." (Pp. 175-76.)

Plekhanov did not speak at all on this subject at the plenary meeting of the congress. What Goldblatt referred to were Plekhanov's words in the Programme Commission, where the "right to self-determination" was explained in a simple and detailed manner to mean the right to secession. Lieber, who spoke after Goldblatt, remarked:

"Of course, if any nationality is unable to live within the frontiers of Russia, the Party will not place any obstacles in its way." (P. 176.)

The reader will see that at the Second Congress of the Party, which adopted the programme, there were no two opinions about self-determination meaning "only" the right to secession. Even the Bundists assimilated this truth at that time, and only in our sad period of continued counter revolution and all sorts of "apostacy" have people been found who, bold in their ignorance, declare that the programme is "vague." But before devoting time to these sorry "quasi Social-Democrats," let us first finish with the attitude of the Poles to the programme.

At the Second Congress (1903) they declared that unity was necessary and urgent. But they left the congress after their "failures" in the Programme Commission, and their *last word* was



their written statement printed in the minutes of the congress and containing the above-mentioned proposals to *substitute* cultural-national autonomy for self-determination.

In 1906 the Polish Marxists joined the Party, and neither upon joining nor afterwards (neither at the congress of 1907, nor at the conference of 1907 and 1908, nor the plenum of 1910) *did they once introduce* a single proposal to amend point nine of the Russian programme!

This is a fact.

And this fact strikingly proves, in spite of all phrases and assurances, that the friends of Rosa Luxemburg regarded this question as having been settled by the debate in the Programme Commission of the Second Congress as well as by the decision of that congress, that they tacitly acknowledged their mistake and corrected it by joining the Party in 1906, after they had left the congress in 1903, and by their having made no attempt, through *Party* channels, to raise the question of amending point nine of the programme.

Rosa Luxemburg's article appeared over her signature in 1903—of course, no one ever took it into his head to deny the right of Party journalists to criticise the programme—and even *after* this article the question of revising point nine was not raised by a *single* official body of the Polish Marxists.

Hence, Trotsky is rendering certain admirers of Rosa Luxemburg a very clumsy service when he writes, in the name of the editors of *Borba* in No. 2 (March 1914):

"... The Polish Marxists consider that 'the right to national self-determination' is entirely devoid of political content and should be deleted from the programme." (P. 25.)

The obliging Trotsky is more dangerous than an enemy!<sup>1</sup>

Trotsky could produce *no* proof except "private conversations" (*i.e.*, simply gossip, on which Trotsky always subsists) for classifying "Polish Marxists" in general as supporters of every article that Rosa Luxemburg writes. Trotsky represented the "Polish

<sup>1</sup> Lenin is paraphrasing the Russian proverb: an obliging fool is more dangerous than an enemy.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

Marxists" as people without honour and conscience, incapable of respecting even their own convictions and the programme of their Party. Obliging Trotsky!

In 1903, when the representatives of the Polish Marxists left the Second Congress *because* of the right to self-determination, Trotsky was entitled to say that they considered this right to be devoid of content and that it should be deleted from the programme.

But after this the Polish Marxists *joined* the Party which possessed such a programme, and not once have they brought in a motion to amend it.<sup>1</sup>

Why did Trotsky withhold these facts from the readers of his journal? Only because it was advantageous for him to speculate on fostering differences between the Polish and the Russian opponents of liquidationism and to deceive the Russian workers on the question of the programme.

Trotsky has never yet held a firm opinion on any serious question relating to Marxism; he always manages to "creep into the chinks" of this or that difference of opinion, and desert one side for the other. At this moment he is in the company of the Bundists and the liquidators. And these gentlemen do not stand on ceremony in regard to the Party.

Here is what Liebmann, the Bundist, says:

"When Russian Social-Democracy," writes this gentleman, "in its programme, fifteen years ago, advanced the point about the right of every nationality to 'self-determination' everyone [!!!] asked himself: what does this fashionable [!!!] term really mean? No answer was given to this [!!!]. This word was left [!!!] enveloped in fog. In fact it was difficult at the time to dissipate that fog. The time had not yet come when this point could be made concrete—they used to say at the time—let it remain enveloped in fog [!!!] for the time being and life itself will indicate what content is to be put into this point."

<sup>1</sup> We are informed that at the Summer Conference of the Russian Marxists in 1913 the Polish Marxists attended with only a consultative vote and did not vote at all on the right to self-determination (to secession), declaring themselves opposed to any such right in general. Of course, they had a perfect right to act in this way, and, as hitherto, to agitate in Poland against its secession. But this is not quite what Trotsky is saying, for the Polish Marxists did not demand the "deletion" of point nine "from the programme."

Isn't this "ragamuffin," mocking at the Party Programme, magnificent?

And why is he mocking?

Only because he is a complete ignoramus who has never learned anything, who has not even read anything about Party history, but who simply happened to drop into a liquidationist environment, where it is the "thing" to be *blase* on Party questions.

In Pomyalovsky's novel, a *bursak*<sup>1</sup> brags of having "spat into a tub filled with cabbage." The honourable Bundists go even further. They put up the Liebmanns so that these gentlemen may publicly spit into their own tub. What do the Liebmanns care about the fact that an international congress has passed a decision? that at the congress of their own Party two representatives of their own Bund proved that they were quite able to understand the meaning of "self-determination" (and what "severe" critics and determined enemies of *Iskra* they were!) and even agreed with it? And would it not be easier to dissolve the Party if the "Party journalists" (don't laugh) treated the history and the programme of the Party in the *bursak* fashion?

Here is a second "ragamuffin," Mr. Yurkevich of *Dzvin*.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Yurkevich has presumably perused the minutes of the Second Congress because he cites Plekhanov's words, as repeated by Goldblatt, and shows that he is familiar with the fact that self-determination can only mean the right to secession. This, however, does not prevent him from spreading slander among the Ukrainian petty bourgeoisie about the Russian Marxists, alleging that they are in favour of the "state integrity" of Russia. (No. 7-8, 1913, p. 83 *et seq.*) Of course, the Yurkeviches could not invent a better method of alienating Ukrainian from Great Russian democrats than this slander. And such alienation is in line with the whole policy of the group of writers on *Dzvin*, who advocate the *segregation* of the Ukrainian workers in a *separate* national organisation!

<sup>1</sup> A student in a theological seminary.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> *Dzvin* (The Bell), a Ukrainian Menshevik monthly magazine, published in Kiev in 1913-14.—*Ed.*

It is quite appropriate, of course, for a group of nationalist philistines who are splitting the ranks of the proletariat—and such precisely is the objective role of *Dzvin*—to disseminate such hopeless confusion on the national question. It goes without saying that Messrs. Yurkevich and Liebmann, who are “terribly” offended when they are called “near-Party men,” did not say a word, not a single word, as to how *they* would like the problem of the right of secession to be solved in the programme.

Here is the third and principal “ragamuffin,” Mr. Semkovsky, who in the columns of a liquidationist newspaper, with a Great Russian audience before him, tears point nine of the programme to pieces and at the same time declares that he “for certain reasons does not approve of the proposal” to delete this point!

This is incredible, but it is a fact.

In August 1912, the conference of the liquidators officially raised the national question. For a year and a half, except for Semkovsky’s article, not a single article has appeared on the question of point nine. And in this article the author *repudiates* the programme, because “for certain reasons” (is it a secret disease?) he does “not approve of the proposal” to amend it! We would lay a wager that it would be difficult to find anywhere in the world similar examples of opportunism, and worse than opportunism, of the renunciation of the Party, of its liquidation.

One instance will suffice to show what Semkovsky’s arguments are like:

“What are we to do,” he writes, “if the Polish proletariat desires to fight side by side with the entire Russian proletariat, within the limits of a single state, while the reactionary classes of Polish society, on the contrary, desire to separate Poland from Russia and in a referendum obtain a majority of votes in favour of secession? Should we Russian Social-Democrats in the central parliament vote together with our Polish comrades *against* secession or—in order not to violate the ‘right to self-determination’—vote *for* secession?” (*Novaya Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 71.)

Hence it is clear that Mr. Semkovsky does not even understand *what the discussion is about*. It did not occur to him that the right to secession presupposes the settlement of the question *not* by the central parliament, but by the parliament (diet, referendum, etc.) of the seceding region.

The childish perplexity over the question—"What are we to do" if under democracy the majority is for reaction?—serves to screen the question of real, actual, live politics, when *both* the Purishkeviches *and* the Kokoshkins consider the very idea of secession criminal! Probably, the proletarians of the *whole* of Russia ought not to fight the Purishkeviches and the Kokoshkins today, but leave them alone and fight the reactionary classes of Poland!

Such is the incredible nonsense that is written in the organ of the liquidators, of which Mr. L. Martov is one of the ideological leaders, the same L. Martov who drafted the programme and got it carried in 1903, and even subsequently wrote in favour of the right of secession. Apparently L. Martov is now arguing according to the rule:

No clever man required there  
Better send Read  
And I shall wait and see.<sup>1</sup>

He sends "Read" Semkovsky, and allows our programme to be distorted and endlessly confused in a daily paper before new sections of readers, who are unacquainted with our programme.

Yes, liquidationism has gone a long way—even very many prominent ex-Social-Democrats have not a trace of Party spirit left in them.

Rosa Luxemburg cannot, of course, be put on a par with the Liebmanns, Yurkeviches and Semkovskys, but the fact that it is precisely people of this kind seize upon her mistake shows with particular clarity the opportunism she has lapsed into.

## X. CONCLUSION

To sum up:

From the point of view of the theory of Marxism in general, the question of the right of self-determination presents no diffi-

<sup>1</sup> A verse from a soldiers' song, attributed to the pen of Leo Tolstoy, alluding to the unsuccessful operations of the Russian troops commanded by General Read in the Crimean War of 1855.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

culties. There can be no serious thought of disputing either the London decision of 1896, or that self-determination implies only the right to secession, or that the formation of independent national states is the tendency of all bourgeois-democratic revolutions.

The difficulty is created to a certain extent by the fact that in Russia the proletariat of both the oppressed and oppressing nations are fighting and must fight side by side. The task is to preserve the unity of the class struggle of the proletariat for socialism, to offer resistance to all the bourgeois and Black Hundred nationalist influences. Among the oppressed nations the separation of the proletariat as an independent party sometimes leads to such a bitter struggle against the nationalism of the respective nation that the perspective becomes distorted and the nationalism of the oppressing nation is forgotten.

But this distortion of the perspective is possible only for a short time. The experience of the joint struggle of the proletarians of various nations has demonstrated only too plainly that we must raise political questions not from the "Cracow," but from the all-Russian point of view. And in all-Russian politics it is the Purishkeviches and the Kokoshkins who rule. Their ideas are predominant, their persecution of alien races for "separatism," for their *thoughts* of secession, are being preached and practised in the Duma, in the schools, in the churches, in the barracks, in hundreds and thousands of newspapers. It is this Great Russian canker of nationalism that is poisoning the entire all-Russian political atmosphere. It is the misfortune of a nation which in subjugating other nations is strengthening reaction throughout Russia. The memories of 1849 and 1863 form a living political tradition, which, unless great storms sweep the country, threatens to hamper every democratic and *especially* every Social-Democratic movement for many decades.

There can be no doubt that, however natural the point of view of certain Marxists of the oppressed nations (whose "misfortune" is sometimes that the masses of the population are blinded by the idea of "their" national liberation) may appear sometimes, *in reality*, owing to the objective alignment of class forces in Russia,

the refusal to advocate the right of self-determination is equal to the worst opportunism, the contamination of the proletariat with the ideas of the Kokoshkins. And in substance these ideas are the ideas and the policy of the Purishkeviches.

Therefore, while Rosa Luxemburg's point of view could at first be excused as being specifically Polish, "Cracow" narrow-mindedness,<sup>1</sup> at the present time, when nationalism and, above all, governmental Great Russian nationalism has grown stronger everywhere, when politics are being shaped by this *Great Russian* nationalism, such narrow-mindedness becomes inexcusable. In fact, it is seized upon by the opportunists of *all* nations who fight shy of the idea of "storms" and "leaps," believe the bourgeois-democratic revolution is over, and yearn for the liberalism of the Kokoshkins.

Great Russian nationalism, like any other nationalism, passes through various phases, according to the various classes in the bourgeois country that are supreme at the time. Before 1905 we knew almost exclusively national reactionaries. After the revolution *national liberals* arose in our country.

In our country this is virtually the position adopted both by the Octobrists and by the Cadets (Kokoshkin), i.e., by the whole of the present day bourgeoisie.

And later on, Great Russian national democrats will *inevitably* arise. Mr. Peshekhonov, one of the founders of the "Popular Socialist" Party, expressed this point of view when (in the August issue of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*<sup>2</sup> for 1906) he appealed for caution in regard to the nationalist prejudices of the peasant. However much others may slander us Bolsheviks and declare that we "idealise" the peasant, we always have made and always will make a clear distinction between peasant intelligence and peasant

<sup>1</sup> It is easy to understand that the recognition by the Marxists of the *whole of Russia*, and first and foremost by the Great Russians, of the *right* of nations to secede in no way precludes *agitation* against secession by Marxists of a particular *oppressed* nation, just as the recognition of the right to divorce does not preclude agitation against divorce in a particular case. We think, therefore, that there will be an ever-increasing number of Polish Marxists who will laugh at the non-existent "contradiction," which is now being "hashed up" by Semkovsky and Trotsky.

<sup>2</sup> *Russian Wealth*.—Ed. Eng. ed.

prejudice, between peasant strivings for democracy and opposition to Purishkevich and peasant strivings to make peace with the priest and the landlord.

Even now, and probably for a fairly long time to come,<sup>1</sup> proletarian democracy must reckon with the nationalism of the Great Russian peasants (in the sense not of concessions to it but of combating it). The awakening of nationalism among the oppressed nations, which became so pronounced after 1905 (let us recall, say, the group of "autonomists-federalists" in the First Duma, the growth of the Ukrainian movement, of the Moslem movement, etc.), will inevitably cause the intensification of nationalism among the Great Russian petty bourgeoisie in town and country. The more slowly the democratisation of Russia proceeds, the more persistent, brutal and bitter will national persecution and quarrelling among the bourgeoisie of the various nations be. The particularly reactionary spirit of the Russian Purishkeviches will at the same time generate (and strengthen) "separatist" tendencies among the various oppressed nationalities which sometimes enjoy far greater freedom in the neighbouring states.

Such a state of affairs sets the proletariat of Russia a twofold, or rather a two-sided task: first, to fight against all nationalism and, above all, against Great Russian nationalism; to recognise not only complete equality of rights for all nations in general, but also equality of rights in forming independent states, *i.e.* the right of nations to self-determination, to secession; and second,

<sup>1</sup> It would be interesting to trace the process of transformation of, for example, nationalism in Poland from aristocratic nationalism into bourgeois nationalism and then into peasant nationalism. Ludwig Bernhard, in his book *Das polnische Gemeinwesen im preussischen Staat* [*The Polish Community in the Prussian State*] (there is a Russian translation entitled *Poles in Prussia*), sharing the view of a German Kokoshkin, describes a very characteristic phenomenon: the formation of a kind of "peasant republic" by the Poles of Germany in the form of a close alliance of the various co-operatives and other associations of the *Polish* peasants in their struggle for nationality, for religion, for "Polish" land. German oppression welded the Poles together, segregated them, first awakening the nationalism of the aristocracy, then of the bourgeois, and finally of the peasant masses (especially after the campaign the Germans inaugurated in 1873 against the Polish language in schools). Things are moving in the same direction in Russia, and not only in regard to Poland.



precisely in the interests of the successful struggle against the nationalism of all nations, in all forms, it sets the task of preserving the unity of the proletarian struggle and of the proletarian organisations, of amalgamating these organisations into an international association, in spite of the bourgeois strivings for national segregation.

Complete equality of rights for all nations; the right of nations to self-determination; the amalgamation of the workers of all nations—this is the national programme that Marxism, the experience of the whole world, and the experience of Russia, teaches the workers.

February 1914.





## INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL IN WORLD POLITICS

THE revolutionary movement in the various states of Europe and Asia has manifested itself so formidably of late that we can discern quite clearly the outlines of a new and incomparably higher stage in the international struggle of the proletariat.

In Persia, a counter-revolution has taken place, which in a peculiar way combined the Russian dispersal of the First Duma with the Russian uprising at the end of 1905. The armies of the Russian tsar, shamefully defeated by the Japanese, are taking revenge by zealously serving the counter-revolution. The exploits of shootings, punitive expeditions, bludgeoning and robberies in Russia are followed by the exploits of the same Cossacks in suppressing the revolution in Persia. That Nicholas Romanov, at the head of the Black Hundred landlords and the capitalists who have been frightened by strikes and civil war, should be raging against the Persian revolutionaries is understandable, and it is not the first time that the Christ-loving Russian warriors are playing the role of international executioners. The fact that England, pharisaically washing her hands, is maintaining an obviously friendly neutrality towards the Persian reactionaries and adherents of absolutism is a phenomenon of a somewhat different order. The liberal English bourgeois, irritated by the growth of the labour movement at home, and frightened by the rise of the revolutionary struggle in India, are more frequently, more frankly and more sharply revealing how *brutal* the most civilised European "statesmen," who have passed through the highest school of constitutionalism, become when the masses are roused for the struggle against capital and against the capitalist colonial system, i.e., the system of slavery, plunder and violence. The position of the Persian revolutionaries in the land which the masters of India

and the counter-revolutionary government of Russia are already preparing to divide between them is a difficult one. But the stubborn struggle in Tabriz, the repeated turn of the fortunes of war to the side of the revolutionaries, who seemed to have been utterly routed, shows that the bashi-bazuks of the Shah, even with the aid of the Lyakhovs<sup>1</sup> and the English diplomats, are meeting with the most determined resistance from below. A revolutionary movement which can put up military resistance to attempts at restoration, which compels the heroes of such attempts to turn to foreigners for assistance, cannot be destroyed and, under such circumstances, the complete triumph of Persian reaction would merely be the prelude to fresh outbursts of popular indignation.

In Turkey, the revolutionary movement in the army, under the leadership of the Young Turks, proved victorious. True, this victory is only half a victory or even less, because the Turkish Nicholas II<sup>2</sup> so far has escaped with a promise to restore the famous Turkish constitution. But such half victories in revolutions, such concessions on the part of the old government hastily ceded under pressure, are the surest pledge of new, far more decisive and acute vicissitudes of civil war involving broader masses of the people. And the school of civil war does not leave the people unaffected. It is a harsh school, and its complete curriculum *inevitably* includes the victories of the counter-revolution, the debaucheries of enraged reactionaries, savage punishments meted out by the old governments to the rebels, etc. But only downright pedants and mentally decrepit mummies can grieve over the fact that nations are entering this painful school; this school teaches the oppressed classes how to conduct civil war; it teaches how to bring about a victorious revolution; it concentrates in the masses of present-day slaves that hatred which is always harboured by the downtrodden, dull, ignorant slaves, and which leads those slaves who have become conscious of the shame of their slavery to the greatest historic exploits.

<sup>1</sup> Lyakhov, commander of the brigade of Russian Cossacks which suppressed the revolution in Persia. —*Ed., Eng. ed.*

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, The Turkish Sultan, Abdul Hamid.—*Ed.*

In India the native slaves of the "civilised" British capitalists have recently been causing their "masters" a lot of unpleasantness and disquietude. There is no end to the violence and plunder which is called British Rule in India. Nowhere in the world, with the exception of Russia, of course, is there such poverty among the masses and such chronic starvation among the population. The most liberal and radical statesmen in free Britain, like John Morley, who is an authority in the eyes of Russian and non-Russian Cadets, the star of the "progressive" (in fact, lackeys of capital) publicists, are, as rulers of India, becoming transformed into real Cenghis Khans, capable of sanctioning all measures for "pacifying" the population in their charge, even the *flogging* of political protestants. The little British Social-Democratic weekly *Justice* is prohibited in India by liberal and "radical" scoundrels like Morley. And when Keir Hardie, the leader of the Independent Labour Party and member of Parliament, had the presumption to go to India and talk to the natives about the elementary demands of democracy, the whole of the English bourgeois press raised a howl against the "rebel." And now the most influential English newspapers, gnashing their teeth, are talking about the "agitators" who are disturbing the peace of India, and are welcoming the purely Russian Plehve<sup>1</sup> sentences pronounced by the courts and the summary punishment meted out to Indian democratic publicists. But the Indian masses are beginning to come out into the streets in defence of their native writers and political leaders. The despicable sentence that the English jackals passed on the Indian Democrat, Tilak (he was sentenced to a long term of exile, and in reply to a question in the House of Commons it was revealed that the Indian jurymen voted for acquittal, whereas the conviction was passed by the *votes of the English jurymen!*), this act of vengeance against a democrat on the part of the lackeys of the moneybags, gave rise to street demonstrations and a strike in Bombay. And the Indian

<sup>1</sup> Plehve, Minister of the Interior in 1902-04, an outstanding reactionary and brutal suppressor of the revolutionary movement. Assassinated in 1904.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

proletariat too has already matured sufficiently to wage a class conscious and political mass struggle—and that being the case, Anglo-Russian methods in India are played out. By their colonial plunder of Asiatic countries, the Europeans have managed to harden one of them, Japan, for great military victories which ensured her independent national development. There is not the slightest doubt that the age-long plunder of India by the English, that the present struggle of these “advanced” Europeans against Persian and Indian democracy, *will harden* millions and tens of millions of proletarians of Asia, will harden them for the same kind of victorious (like the Japanese) struggle against the oppressors. The class conscious workers of Europe now have Asiatic comrades and their number will grow by leaps and bounds.

In China, the revolutionary movement against mediævalism has also made itself felt with particular force during the last few months. Nothing definite, it is true, can as yet be said about this particular movement—so little information is available about it and such an abundance of rumours about revolts in various parts of China—but there cannot be any doubt about the rapid growth of a “new spirit” and of “European tendencies” in China, especially after the Russo-Japanese war; hence, the transformation of the old Chinese riots into a conscious democratic movement is inevitable. That some of the participants in the colonial plunder have become disturbed this time is seen from the behaviour of the French in Indo-China; they have *helped* the Chinese “*historical government*” to mete out punishment to the revolutionaries! They were apprehensive for the integrity of “their own” neighbouring Asiatic possessions.

But it is not only the Asiatic possessions that give cause for apprehension to the French bourgeoisie. The barricades in Villeteneuve-Saint-Georges, near Paris, the shooting down of the strikers who put up these barricades (Thursday, July 30 [17]), these events have indicated again and again the intensification of the class struggle in Europe. Clemenceau, the radical, who is ruling France on behalf of the capitalists, is doing his very best to dissipate the last remnants of the republican bourgeois illusions held by the proletariat. The shooting down of the workers by the

troops acting on the order of the "radical" government has certainly become a more frequent occurrence under Clemenceau than ever before. For this, Clemenceau has already been nicknamed "Red Clemenceau" by the French Socialists and now, when the blood of the workers has again been shed by his agents, gendarmes and generals, the Socialists are recalling the winged word once uttered by this most progressive bourgeois republican to a workers' delegation: "We stand on opposite sides of the barricade." Yes, certainly, the French proletariat and the most extreme bourgeois republicans are finally taking up positions on opposite sides of the barricade. The working class of France has shed much blood in winning and defending the republic, and at the present time, on the basis of the thoroughly consolidated republican regime, the decisive struggle between the property owners and the toilers is approaching more and more rapidly. *L'Humanité*<sup>1</sup> wrote about July 30 [17]: "This was not a mere beating up, it was a miniature battle." The generals and the police agents wanted at all costs to provoke the workers and transform a peaceful unarmed demonstration into a massacre. But, having surrounded the strikers and demonstrators on all sides and attacked the unarmed people, the troops encountered resistance, with the result that barricades were immediately erected, leading to events which are agitating the whole of France. These barricades made of small planks were ridiculously poor, writes the same newspaper. But that is not the point. The point is that under the Third Republic barricades had dropped out of use. Now "Clemenceau is once more bringing them into use," and in this connection he is just as frank in his arguments as the "executioners of June 1848 and Gallifet in 1871" when they spoke of civil war.

And the Socialist press is not alone in recalling these great historic dates in connection with the events of July 30 [17].

The bourgeois newspapers attack the workers with frantic fury and accuse them of having behaved as if they intended to start a socialist revolution. And one of these newspapers relates a small

<sup>1</sup> The central organ of the United Socialist Party of France. Now the central organ of the French Communist Party.—*Ed.*



but characteristic incident depicting the mood of both parties at the scene of action. When the workers were carrying one of their wounded comrades past General Virvère, who was leading the attack upon the strikers, shouts were heard from the crowd of demonstrators: "*Saluez!*" And the general of the bourgeois republic saluted the wounded enemy.

An intensification of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie may be observed in all the advanced capitalist countries, and the difference in the historical conditions, political regime and forms of the labour movement creates the difference in the manifestations of one and the same tendency. In America and England, where there is complete political liberty, and where live, revolutionary and socialist traditions are completely, or at all events, almost completely lacking among the working class, this intensification is manifested in the intensification of the movement against the trusts, in the extraordinary growth of Socialism and in the growing attention being paid to it by the propertied classes, and in the fact that the labour organisations, sometimes the purely industrial organisations, are taking up the systematic and independent proletarian political struggle. In Austria and Germany, partly also in the Scandinavian countries, the intensification of the class struggle is expressed in the election campaigns, in the relations between the parties, in the *rapprochement* between the bourgeoisie of various shades against their common foe, the proletariat, and in the intensification of police and legal persecution. Two hostile camps are slowly but surely increasing their forces, are strengthening their organisations and are separating with increasing sharpness in all fields of public life, as if silently and intently preparing for the impending revolutionary battles. In the Latin countries—in Italy, especially in France—the intensification of the class struggle is expressed in particularly stormy, sharp, and to some extent directly revolutionary outbreaks, in which the pent-up hatred of the proletariat for its oppressors bursts out with sudden violence and the "peaceful" environment of the parliamentary struggle is supplanted by scenes of real civil war.

The international revolutionary movement of the proletariat

does not proceed and cannot proceed evenly and in the same form in different countries. The thorough and all-sided utilisation of all possibilities in all spheres of activity comes only as a result of the class struggle of the workers of various countries. Every country contributes its own valuable original traits to the general stream, but in every individual country the movement suffers from some kind of one-sidedness, from some theoretical or practical shortcoming in the individual Socialist Parties. On the whole, we clearly see that international Socialism has made an enormous stride forward, we see the welding together of the armies of millions of proletarians in a number of concrete encounters with the enemy, we see the approach of the decisive struggle against the bourgeoisie—a struggle for which the working class is immeasurably better *prepared* than was the case at the time of the Paris Commune, that last great rebellion of the proletarians.

And this stride forward by the whole of international Socialism, together with the sharpening of the revolutionary democratic struggle in Asia, places the Russian revolution in a peculiar and particularly difficult position. The Russian revolution possesses a great international ally both in Europe and in Asia, but at the same time, and *just because of this*, it possesses not only a national, not only a Russian, but also an *international* enemy. Reaction against the intensifying struggle of the proletariat is inevitable in all the capitalist countries, and this reaction unites the bourgeois governments of the whole world against any popular movement, against any revolution in Asia, and especially in Europe. The opportunists in our Party, like the majority of the Russian liberal intelligentsia, still dream of a bourgeois revolution in Russia that will neither “repel” nor scare the bourgeoisie, that will neither generate “extreme” reaction, nor lead to the capture of power by the revolutionary classes. Vain hopes! A philistine utopia! Inflammable material is accumulating so rapidly in all the progressive countries of the world, the conflagration is so obviously spreading to the majority of the countries of Asia, which but yesterday were fast asleep, that the strengthening of the international bourgeois reaction and the intensification of each individual national revolution are absolutely inevitable.

The counter-revolution in Russia is not fulfilling, and cannot fulfil, the historical tasks of our revolution. The Russian bourgeoisie is inevitably gravitating more and more to the side of the international anti-proletarian and anti-democratic tendency. It is not on liberal allies that the Russian proletariat must count. It must follow its own path independently, towards the complete victory of the revolution, and base itself on the need for a forcible solution of the agrarian problem in Russia by the peasant masses themselves. It must help these masses to overthrow the rule of the Black Hundred landlords and of the Black Hundred autocracy; it must set itself the task of establishing the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry in Russia and bear in mind that its struggle and its victories are indissolubly bound up with the international revolutionary movement. Fewer illusions concerning the liberalism of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie (in Russia and in the entire world). More attention to the growth of the international revolutionary proletariat!

August [July] 1908.

## DEMOCRACY AND NARODISM IN CHINA

THE article written by the provisional President of the Chinese Republic, Sun Yat-sen, which we reprint from the Brussels Socialist newspaper, *Le Peuple*, is of exceptional interest for us Russians.

As the proverb says: the onlooker sees most of the game. Sun Yat-sen is an exceedingly interesting "onlooker," because, while he is an educated man in the European sense of the word, he is, apparently, totally uninformed about Russia. And now this man with a European education, the representative of militant and victorious Chinese democracy which has won a republic for itself, raises before us—quite independently of Russia, of Russian experience, of Russian literature—purely Russian questions. The progressive Chinese democrat talks exactly like a Russian. His similarity to the Russian Narodnik is so great that his fundamental ideas and a number of his expressions are completely identical with the latter's.

The onlooker sees most of the game. The platform of the great Chinese democracy—for Sun Yat-sen's article is precisely such a platform—compels us and gives us a convenient opportunity once more to consider the question of the relation between democracy and Narodism in the present-day bourgeois revolutions of Asia from the angle of new world events. This is one of the most serious questions that confronted Russia in its revolutionary epoch which began in 1905. And it not only confronted Russia, but the whole of Asia, as is evident from the platform of the provisional President of the Chinese Republic, especially if we compare this platform with the development of revolutionary events in Russia, Turkey, Persia and China.<sup>1</sup> In very many and

<sup>1</sup> See preceding article, "Inflammable Material in World Politics," and notes to same.—*Ed.*

very essential respects Russia is undoubtedly an Asiatic country, and, moreover, one of the wildest, most mediæval and shamefully backward of Asiatic countries.

Russian bourgeois democracy has been dyed a Narodnik colour from the days of its distant and lonely pioneer, the nobleman, Herzen, down to its mass representatives, the members of the Peasant League of 1905 and the Trudovik deputies in the first three Dumas of 1906-12. Now we observe that bourgeois democracy in China is dyed exactly the same Narodnik colour. Let us now consider, with Sun Yat-sen as an example, the social significance of the ideas generated by the profound revolutionary movement of hundreds and hundreds of millions of people who are now being completely drawn into the stream of world capitalist civilisation.

A militant, sincere spirit of democracy pervades every line of Sun Yat-sen's platform. It reveals a thorough appreciation of the inadequacy of a "racial" revolution. It does not betray a trace of the non-political spirit, or of indifference towards political liberty, or any admission of the idea that Chinese autocracy is compatible with Chinese "social reform," with Chinese constitutional reforms, etc. It is the expression of complete democracy and the demand for a republic. It directly presents the question of the conditions of the masses, of the mass struggle; it expresses warm sympathy for the toilers and the exploited, belief in the justice of their cause and in their strength.

What we have before us is a really great ideology of a really great people, which is able not only to bemoan its age-long slavery, not only to dream of liberty and equality, but is able also to *fight* the age-long oppressors of China.

A comparison naturally suggests itself between the provisional President of the Republic in wild, dead Asiatic China and the various presidents of the republics in Europe and America, in countries of progressive culture. The presidents in *those* republics are all businessmen, agents or tools in the hands of the bourgeoisie, which is rotten to the core and besmirched from head to foot with mud and blood, not with the blood of emperors and potentates, but with the blood of workers shot down in strikes in

the name of progress and civilisation. The presidents in those countries are the representatives of the bourgeoisie, which very long ago renounced all the ideals of its youth, which has utterly prostituted itself, sold itself body and soul to the millionaires and billionaires, to the feudal rulers turned bourgeois, and others.

In China, the Asiatic provisional President of the Republic is a revolutionary democrat imbued with the nobility and heroism that is inherent in a class that is in the ascendancy and not on the decline, which does not fear the future, but believes in it and bravely fights for it—a class which, instead of striving to preserve and restore the past in order to safeguard its privileges, hates the past and knows how to discard its deadening decay, which strangles every living thing.

Well, does this mean that the materialist West is utterly decayed, that light shines only from the mystic, religious East? No, just the opposite. It means that the East has finally struck the path of the West, that new *hundreds and hundreds of millions of people* will henceforth take part in the struggle for the ideals which the West has worked out. The Western bourgeoisie has decayed and is already being confronted by its grave-diggers—the proletariat. But in Asia there *still* exists a bourgeoisie capable of representing sincere, militant, consistent democracy, a worthy companion of the great preachers and great public men of the end of the eighteenth century in France.

The chief representative or the main social support of this Asiatic bourgeoisie, which is still capable of performing historically progressive deeds, is the peasant. By his side there already exists a liberal bourgeoisie, whose politicians, like Yuan Shih-kai, are, above all, capable of treachery: yesterday they feared the emperor, cringed before him; then, when they saw the strength and sensed the victory of revolutionary democracy, they betrayed the emperor; tomorrow they will betray the democrats in order to strike a bargain with some old or new “constitutional” emperor.

The real liberation of the Chinese people from age-long slavery would be impossible were it not for the great, sincere democratic enthusiasm which is stirring the toiling masses and rendering

The difference between the value of land in some out-of-the-way village and in Shanghai is the difference in the level of rent. The value of land is capitalised rent. To make the "enhanced value" of land the "property of the people" means transferring the rent, *i.e.*, property in land, to the state, or in other words, nationalising the land.

Is such a reform possible within the framework of capitalism? It is not only possible, it represents the purest, most consistent, ideally perfect capitalism. Marx pointed this out in his *Poverty of Philosophy*, he proved it in detail in Volume III of *Capital*, and he developed this idea with particular clarity in his polemics with Rodbertus in *Theories of Surplus Value*.

Land nationalisation makes it possible to abolish absolute rent, leaving only differential rent. According to the tenets of Marx, land nationalisation means the utmost elimination of mediæval monopolies and mediæval relations in agriculture, maximum freedom in disposing of land, maximum facility for agriculture to adapt itself to the market. By the irony of history, Narodism, in the name of the "struggle against capitalism" in agriculture, advocates an agrarian programme which, if fully realised, would mean the *most* rapid development of capitalism in agriculture.

What was the economic necessity that caused the spread of the most progressive bourgeois-democratic agrarian programmes in one of the most backward peasant countries of Asia? The necessity of destroying feudalism in all its forms and manifestations.

The more China lagged behind Europe and Japan, the more it was threatened with disintegration and national decay. It could only be "regenerated" by the heroism of the revolutionary masses of the people, by a heroism capable of creating a Chinese republic in the sphere of politics, and of ensuring the most rapid capitalist progress by means of land nationalisation in the agrarian sphere.

Whether and to what extent this will succeed is another question. Various countries in their bourgeois revolutions have achieved various degrees of political and agrarian democracy, and in the most diverse combinations. The deciding factors will be the international situation and the relation of social forces in China.

The emporor will surely unite the feudal rulers, the bureaucracy and the Chinese clergy and prepare for restoration. Yuan Shih-kai, the representative of the bourgeoisie, which has only just changed from liberal monarchist to liberal republican (for how long?), will pursue a policy of manœuvring between monarchy and revolution. Revolutionary bourgeois democracy represented by Sun Yat-sen is correctly seeking the path to the "regeneration" of China in the development of the maximum of initiative, resoluteness and boldness of the peasant masses in the matter of political and agrarian reforms.

Finally, to the extent that the number of Shanghais increases in China, the Chinese proletariat will increase as well. It will probably form some sort of Chinese Social-Democratic Labour Party, which, while criticising the petty-bourgeois utopias and reactionary views of Sun Yat-sen, will certainly take care to single out, defend and develop the revolutionary-democratic core of his political and agrarian programme.

July 1912.



## REGENERATED CHINA

PROGRESSIVE and civilised Europe takes no interest in the regeneration of China. Four hundred million backward Asiatics have achieved freedom, have awakened to political life. *One fourth* of the population of the globe has passed, so to speak, from slumber to light, to movement, to struggle.

Civilised Europe is not concerned with this. Up to the present moment not even the French Republic has officially recognised the Chinese Republic! An interpellation on this subject will soon be introduced in the French Chamber of Deputies.

How can Europe's indifference to this be explained? By the fact that everywhere in the West the rule of the imperialist bourgeoisie prevails, the rule of a bourgeoisie which is almost rotten to the core and ready to sell its entire "civilisation" to any adventurer in return for "strict" measures against the workers, or for an extra five kopeks' profit on the ruble. This bourgeoisie regards China *only* as booty, which now, after Russia has taken Mongolia into her "tender embraces," will probably be torn to pieces by the Japanese, the British, the Germans, etc.

Yet the regeneration of China is proceeding apace. At the present time parliamentary elections are beginning—elections for the *first* parliament of the former despotic state. The Lower Chamber will consist of 600 members, the "Senate" of 274.

The suffrage is *neither* universal *nor* direct. The right to vote is enjoyed only by those who are over twenty-one years of age and have been resident in the given constituency for not less than two years, provided they pay direct taxes to an amount equal to about 2 rubles, or possess property worth about 500 rubles. They first elect electors who, in their turn, elect the deputies.

This system of franchise in itself indicates the existence of an alliance of the well-to-do peasantry with the bourgeoisie, while a proletariat is either non-existent or is quite impotent.

This is also indicated by the character of the political parties in China. There are three main parties:

1) The "Radical-Socialist Party," which in reality is *altogether devoid* of socialism, just like our "Narodni-Socialists" (and nine-tenths of the "Socialist-Revolutionaries").

It is the party of petty-bourgeois *democracy*. Its principal demands are: the political unity of China, the development of trade and industries "in a social direction" (a phrase as nebulous as the "labour principle" and "equalisation" used by our Narodniki and Socialist-Revolutionaries), the preservation of peace.

2) The second party is that of the liberals. They are in alliance with the "Radical-Socialist Party" and together with the latter form the "*National Party*." In all probability this party will obtain a majority in the first Chinese parliament. The leader of this party is the celebrated Dr. Sun Yat-sen. At the present time he is particularly engaged in working out a plan for an extensive network of railways (we may mention for the benefit of the Russian Narodniki that Sun Yat-sen is doing this *so that* China may "avoid" the fate of capitalism).

3) The third party is called the "League of Republicans"—an example of how deceptive signboards are in politics! In reality this is a *conservative* party, which depends principally on government officials, landlords and the bourgeoisie of *Northern* China, *i.e.*, the most backward part of the country. The "National Party," on the other hand, is mainly the party of the more industrial, more progressive and more developed *Southern* China.

The "National Party" obtains its main support from the wide masses of the peasants. Its leaders are the intelligentsia who have been educated abroad.

Chinese freedom has been won by the alliance of peasant democracy with the liberal bourgeoisie. The near future will show whether the peasants, without the leadership of a proletarian party, will succeed in holding their democratic position *against* the liberals, who are only waiting for the opportune moment to desert to the Right.

## THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST CONGRESS IN STUTTGART

THE Stuttgart Congress held recently was the twelfth congress of the proletarian International. The first five congresses belong to the period of the First International (1866-72), which was guided by Marx, who, as Bebel aptly observed, tried to unite the militant proletariat internationally from above. This attempt could not be successful before the national Socialist Parties were consolidated and strengthened, but the activities of the First International rendered great services to the labour movement of all countries and left lasting traces.

The Second International was inaugurated at the International Socialist Congress in Paris in 1889. At the subsequent congresses in Brussels (1891), in Zürich (1893), in London (1896), in Paris (1900), and in Amsterdam (1904), this new International, resting on strong national parties, was finally consolidated. In Stuttgart there were 884 delegates from 25 nations of Europe, Asia (Japan and some from India), America, Australia and Africa (there was one delegate from South Africa).

The great importance of the International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart lies in the fact that it marked the final consolidation of the Second International and the transformation of International congresses into business-like meetings which exercise very considerable influence on the character and the tendency of Socialist work throughout the world. Formally, the decisions of the International congresses are not binding on the individual nations, but their moral importance is such that the non-observance of decisions is, in practice, an exception which occurs almost less frequently than the non-observance by the individual Parties of the decisions of their own congresses. The Amsterdam Congress succeeded in uniting the French Socialists, and its resolution

against "ministerialism," in effect, expressed the will of the class conscious proletariat of the whole world and determined the policy of the working class parties.

The Stuttgart Congress made a big stride forward in the same direction, and on very many important questions it proved to be the supreme body that determines the political line of socialism. The Stuttgart Congress, more firmly than the Amsterdam Congress, determined this line in the spirit of revolutionary Social-Democracy against opportunism. The organ of the German Social-Democratic working women, *Die Gleichheit* (*Equality*), edited by Clara Zetkin, justly observed in this connection:

"On all questions the various deviations of certain Socialist Parties towards opportunism were corrected in a revolutionary sense with the co-operation of the Socialists of all countries."

The remarkable and sad feature in this connection was that German Social-Democracy, which hitherto had always upheld the revolutionary standpoint in Marxism, proved to be unstable, or occupied an opportunist position. The Stuttgart Congress confirmed a profound observation uttered by Engels on the German labour movement. On April 29, 1886, Engels wrote to Sorge, a veteran of the First International, as follows:

"In general, it is a good thing that the leadership of the Germans is being challenged somewhat, especially since they have elected so many philistine elements (which is unavoidable, it is true). In Germany everything becomes philistine in calm times; the sting of French competition is thus absolutely necessary.

"And it will not be lacking."

The sting of French competition was not lacking at Stuttgart, and this sting proved to be really necessary, for the Germans displayed a good deal of philistinism. It is especially important for the Russian Social-Democrats to bear this in mind, for our liberals (and not only the liberals) are doing their utmost to represent precisely the least creditable features of German Social-Democracy as a model worthy of imitation. The most thoughtful, sagacious and distinguished leaders of thought of the German Social-Democrats have themselves noted this fact and, casting aside all false shame, have definitely pointed it out as a warning.

"In Amsterdam," writes Clara Zetkin's journal, "the revolutionary *leit-motif* of all the debates in the parliament of the world proletariat was the Dresden resolution: in Stuttgart a jarring opportunist note was struck by Vollmar's speeches in the Commission on Militarism, by Peplow's speeches in the Emigration Commission, and by David's [and, we will add, Bernstein's] speeches in the Colonial Commission. On this occasion, in most of the commissions, on most questions, the representatives of Germany were leaders of opportunism."

And K. Kautsky in appraising the Stuttgart Congress writes:

"...the leading role which German Social-Democracy has virtually played in the Second International hitherto did not make itself felt on this occasion."

Let us now pass on to the consideration of the separate questions that were discussed at the congress. The differences of opinion on the colonial question could not be smoothed out in the commission. The controversy between the opportunists and the revolutionaries was settled by the congress itself, settled in favour of the revolutionaries by a majority of 127 votes against 108, with 10 abstentions. Let us incidentally note this welcome feature, that *all* the Socialists of Russia, unanimously, and on *all* questions, voted in a revolutionary spirit. (Russia had 20 votes of which 10 were given to the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party not including the Poles, 7 to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and 3 to the representatives of the trade unions. Poland had 10 votes: the Polish Social-Democrats—4, and the Polish Socialist Party and the non-Russian parts of Poland—6. Finally the two representatives of Finland had 8 votes.)

On the colonial question an opportunist majority was formed in the commission, and the following monstrous phrase appeared in the draft resolution: "The congress does not on principle and for all time reject all colonial policy, which, under a socialist regime, may exercise a civilising influence." In reality this proposition was equal to a direct retreat to the side of bourgeois policy and bourgeois outlook which justifies colonial wars and atrocities. It is a retreat towards Roosevelt, said one of the American delegates. The attempts to justify this retreat by talking about the tasks of a "socialist colonial policy" and of the positive work of reform in the colonies were most unfortunate. Socialism has never refused and never refuses to advocate reforms in the

colonies as well; but this has nothing to do, nor should it have anything to do, with the weakening of our principle of opposing conquest, the subjugation of other nations, violence and plunder, which constitute "colonial policy." The minimum programme of all the Socialist Parties applies both to the "mother country" and to the colonies. The very concept "socialist colonial policy" is an expression of endless confusion. The congress quite properly deleted the above words from the resolution and substituted for them a still sharper condemnation of colonial policy than that contained in former resolutions.

The resolution on the attitude of the Socialist Parties towards the trade unions is of particularly great importance for us Russians. In our country this question is on the order of the day. The Stockholm Congress settled it in favour of *non-Party* trade unions, *i.e.*, it confirmed the position of our partisans of *neutrality*, headed by Plekhanov. The London Congress took a step towards *Party* trade unions as *against* neutrality. As is known, the London resolution caused great controversy and dissatisfaction in a section of the trade unions and especially in the bourgeois-democratic press.

In Stuttgart, the question raised was essentially as follows: trade union neutrality or closer *rapprochement* between the trade unions and the Party? And, as the reader may gather from the resolution, the International Socialist Congress declared in favour of closer *rapprochement* between the unions and the Party. There is nothing in the resolution to suggest that the trade unions should be neutral or non-Party. Kautsky, who in the German Social-Democratic Party advocated the *rapprochement* between the unions and the Party as against the neutrality advocated by Bebel, was therefore fully entitled to announce to the Leipzig workers in his report on the Stuttgart Congress (*Vorwärts*, 1907, No. 209, *Beilage*):

"The resolution of the Stuttgart Congress expresses all we want. *It puts an end to neutrality for ever.*"

Clara Zetkin writes:

"No one" (in Stuttgart) "any longer disputed on principle the fundamental, historical tendency of the proletarian class struggle to link the political with the economic struggle, to unite the political and economic

organisations as closely as possible into a single socialist working class force. Only the representative of the Russian Social-Democrats, Comrade Plekhanov" (she should have said the representative of the Mensheviks, who delegated him to the commission as an advocate of neutrality), "and the majority of the French delegation attempted, by rather unconvincing arguments, to justify a certain limitation of this principle on the plea that special conditions prevailed in their countries. The overwhelming majority of the congress favoured a resolute policy of unity between Social-Democracy and the trade unions."

It should be observed that Plekhanov's unfortunate (according to Zetkin's just opinion) argument went the rounds of the Russian legally published papers in this form. Plekhanov in the commission of the Stuttgart Congress referred to the fact that "in Russia there are eleven revolutionary parties," and asked: "With which of them should the trade unions unite?" (We are citing from *Vorwärts*, No. 196, I. *Beilage*.) Plekhanov's reference is wrong both in fact and in principle. In reality, not more than two parties in every nationality of Russia are fighting for influence over the socialist proletariat: Social-Democrats and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Polish Social-Democrats and the Polish Socialist Party, the Lettish Social-Democrats and the Lettish Socialist-Revolutionaries (the so-called Lettish Social-Democratic League), the Armenian Social-Democrats and the Dashnaksutyuns, etc. The Russian delegation in Stuttgart also at once divided into two sections. The figure eleven is altogether arbitrary and misleads the workers. As regards principles, Plekhanov is wrong because the struggle between proletarian and petty-bourgeois socialism in Russia is inevitable everywhere, including the trade unions. The English delegates, for example, did not even think of opposing the resolution, although they, too, have two socialist parties fighting each other—the Social-Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour Party.

That the idea of neutrality, which was rejected in Stuttgart, had had time to inflict much damage on the labour movement is seen particularly clearly from the example of Germany. There, neutrality has been preached most and applied most. As a result, the trade unions of Germany have deviated so obviously in the direction of opportunism that this deviation was openly admitted even by a man like Kautsky, who is so cautious on this question.

In his report to the Leipzig workers he directly stated that the "conservatism" shown by the German delegation in Stuttgart "becomes understandable if we bear in mind the composition of this delegation. Half of it consisted of representatives of the trade unions, and thus the 'Right wing' of our Party was more strongly represented than their actual strength in the Party warranted."

The resolution of the Stuttgart Congress will undoubtedly hasten the decisive break of Russian Social-Democracy with the idea of neutrality so beloved by our liberals. While observing the necessary caution and gradualness, and without taking any rash or tactless steps, we must work persistently in the trade unions for the purpose of drawing them nearer and nearer to the Social-Democratic Party.

Then, on the question of emigration and immigration, a very definite difference of opinion arose between the opportunists and the revolutionaries in the commission of the Stuttgart Congress. The opportunists fostered the idea of *limiting* the right of emigration of the backward uneducated workers—especially the Japanese and the Chinese. In the minds of these opportunists, the spirit of narrow craft seclusion, of trade union exclusiveness, outweighed the realisation of the socialist tasks, *viz.*, the work of educating and organising those strata of the proletariat which have not yet been drawn into the labour movement. The congress rejected everything that smacked of this spirit. Even in the commission there were only a few solitary votes in favour of limiting the freedom of emigration, and the resolution adopted by the International Congress is permeated with the recognition of the solidarity of the workers of all countries in the class struggle.

The resolution on the question of women's suffrage was also passed unanimously. Only one Englishwoman from the semi-bourgeois "Fabian Society" defended the admissibility of a struggle for women's suffrage which was to be limited to those possessing property, instead of a struggle for full women's suffrage. The congress absolutely rejected this and declared in favour of working women conducting the struggle for the franchise, not in conjunction with the bourgeois partisans of women's rights, but in conjunction with the class parties of the proletariat. The congress



recognised that in the campaign for women's suffrage it was necessary to uphold fully the principles of socialism and equal rights for men and women without distorting these principles for the sake of expediency.

In this connection an interesting difference of opinion arose in the commission. The Austrians (Victor Adler, Adelheid Popp) justified their tactics in the struggle for manhood suffrage: for the sake of winning this suffrage, they thought it expedient in their agitation not to put the demand for women's suffrage in the foreground. The German Social-Democrats, and especially Zetkin, had protested against this when the Austrians conducted their campaign for universal suffrage. Zetkin declared in the press that they should not under any circumstances have neglected the demand for women's suffrage, that the Austrians had opportunistically sacrificed principle for the sake of expediency, and that they would not have narrowed the sweep of their agitation, but would have widened it and increased the strength of the popular movement had they with equal energy fought for women's suffrage also. In the commission Zetkin was supported whole-heartedly by another prominent German woman Social-Democrat, Zietz. Adler's amendment, which indirectly justified the Austrian tactics, was *rejected* by 12 votes to 9 (this amendment merely stated that there should be no abatement of the struggle for a suffrage that would really extend to all citizens, instead of stating that the struggle for suffrage should always be accompanied by the demand for equal rights for men and women). The point of view of the commission and of the congress may be most exactly expressed in the following words uttered by the above-mentioned Zietz in her speech at the International Conference of Socialist Women<sup>o</sup> (this conference took place in Stuttgart simultaneously with the congress):

"On principle we must demand all that we consider to be correct," said Zietz, "and only when we lack forces for the struggle do we accept what we are able to obtain. Such have always been the tactics of Social-Democracy. The more moderate our demands the more moderate will be the government's concessions."

This controversy between the Austrian and German women Social-Democrats will enable the reader to see how sternly the best

Marxists regard the slightest deviation from the principles of consistent revolutionary tactics.

The last day of the congress was devoted to the question of militarism in which everyone took the greatest interest. The notorious Hervé advocated a very unsound position. He was unable to connect war with the capitalist regime in general, and anti-militarist agitation with the entire work of socialism. Hervé's scheme, to "reply" to any war by a strike and an uprising, revealed an utter lack of understanding of the fact that the application of one or other of the means of struggle depends not on any decision revolutionaries may have made previously but on the objective conditions of the particular crisis, both economic and political, caused by the war.

But even though Hervé did show that he was light-minded, superficial and easily carried away by resonant phrases, it would be extreme short-sightedness to reply to him by a mere dogmatic exposition of the general truths of socialism. Vollmar particularly dropped into this error (of which Bebel and Guesde were not entirely free). With the extraordinary conceit of a man infatuated with stereotyped parliamentarism, he attacked Hervé without noticing that his own narrow-mindedness and crusty opportunism *compel* one to recognise the living stream in Hervéism, *in spite* of the theoretical absurdity and folly of the manner in which Hervé himself presents the question. It sometimes happens that at a new turning point of a movement, theoretical absurdities cover up some practical truth. And this aspect of the question, the appeal that not only parliamentary methods of struggle should be valued, the appeal to act in accordance with the new conditions of the future war and the future crisis, was stressed by the revolutionary Social-Democrats, especially by Rosa Luxemburg in her speech. Together with the Russian Social-Democratic delegates (Lenin and Martov acted in full agreement on this), Rosa Luxemburg proposed amendments to Bebel's resolution, and these amendments emphasised the need for agitation among the youth, the necessity of taking advantage of the crisis created by war for the purpose of hastening the downfall of the bourgeoisie, the necessity of bearing in mind the inevitable change of methods and

means of struggle in accordance with the intensification of the class struggle and the changes in the political situation. Bebel's resolution, dogmatically one-sided, dead, and open to a Vollmarian interpretation, was thus finally transformed into an altogether different resolution. All the theoretical truths were repeated in it for the edification of the Hervéists, who are capable of forgetting socialism for the sake of anti-militarism. But these truths did not serve as an introduction to a justification of parliamentary cretinism, to the sanction of peaceful methods alone, to the worship of the present relatively peaceful and quiet situation, but to the recognition of all methods of struggle, to the appraisal of the experience of the revolution in Russia, to the development of the active creative aspect of the movement.

Zetkin's journal, to which we have referred more than once, very aptly describes this most outstanding, most important feature of the congress resolution on anti-militarism:

"And here too," says Zetkin about the anti-militarist resolution, "the revolutionary energy (*Tatkraft*) as well as the courageous faith of the working class in its fighting capacity finally gained a victory over the pessimistic gospel of impotence and the fossilised tendency to confine oneself to old, exclusively parliamentary methods of struggle, as well as over the banal anti-militarist sport of the French semi-anarchists of the Hervé type. The resolution, which was finally carried unanimously both by the commission and by nearly 900 delegates of all countries, expresses in energetic terms the gigantic upsurge of the revolutionary labour movement since the last International Congress; the resolution advances as a principle of proletarian tactics their flexibility, their capacity for development, *their intensification* (*Zuspitzung*) in proportion as conditions ripen for that purpose."

Hervéism has been rejected, but rejected not in favour of opportunism, not from the point of view of dogmatism and passivity. The keen striving for ever more resolute and new methods of struggle is wholly recognised by the international proletariat and linked up with the intensification of all the economic contradictions, with all the conditions of crises created by capitalism.

Not the empty Hervéist threat, but the clear conviction of the inevitability of the social revolution, firm determination to fight to the end, readiness to adopt the most revolutionary methods of struggle—such is the significance of the resolution of the In-

ternational Socialist Congress in Stuttgart on the question of militarism.

The army of the proletariat is growing in all countries. Its class consciousness, unity and determination are growing by leaps and bounds. And capitalism is successfully providing for a greater frequency of crises, which this army will utilise in order to destroy capitalism.

End of 1907.

## MILITANT MILITARISM AND THE ANTI-MILITARIST TACTICS OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

### I

THE diplomatists are in a state of agitation. "Notes," "dispatches," "declarations" are coming down like hail; the Ministers are whispering behind the backs of the crowned dummies who are "consolidating peace" with glasses of champagne. But the "subjects" know full well that when ravens flock together there is a corpse about. And the Conservative Lord Cromer declared in the British Parliament that "we are living in a time when national" (?) "interests are at stake, when passions are inflamed and there is the danger and possibility of a conflict, however peaceful" (!) "the intentions of the rulers may be."

Sufficient inflammable material has been accumulating of late and it is still mounting up. The revolution in Persia threatens to break down all the partitions, the "spheres of influence" set up there by the European Powers. The constitutional movement in Turkey threatens to wrest this appanage from the clutches of the European capitalist robbers; furthermore, the ancient "questions"—the Macedonian, the Central Asiatic, the Far Eastern etc., etc.—have now been raised in an acute and threatening manner.

Meanwhile, with the network of existing open and secret treaties, agreements, etc., the slightest fillip by any "Power" will be sufficient to "fan the spark into a flame."

And the more formidably the governments brandish their weapons at each other, the more ruthlessly do they suppress the anti-militarist movement in their respective countries. The persecution of anti-militarists is growing in extent and in intensity. The "Radical-Socialist" Cabinet of Clemenceau-Briand does not lag behind the Junker-Conservative Cabinet of Bulow in the matter of oppression. The dissolution of the "youth organisa-

tions" throughout Germany, which followed the introduction of the new law on unions and meetings prohibiting the attendance of persons under twenty years of age at political meetings, has extremely hampered anti-militarist agitation in Germany.

As a consequence, the controversy over the anti-militarist tactics of the Socialists, which subsided after the Stuttgart Congress, is now being revived in the Party press.

What at first sight seems a strange phenomenon presents itself: in spite of the obvious importance of this question, in spite of the clear, strikingly manifest harmfulness of militarism, it is difficult for the proletariat to find another question on which there is so much vacillation, so much discord among the Western Socialists as in the controversy over anti-militarist tactics.

The principles of the premises for the correct solution of this problem were laid down quite firmly long ago, and they do not give rise to any differences of opinion. Contemporary militarism is the result of capitalism; it is the "living manifestation" of capitalism in both its forms: as a military force used by the capitalist states in their external conflicts (*Militarismus nach aussen*<sup>1</sup> as the Germans put it) and as a weapon in the hands of the ruling classes for the suppression of all movements (economic and political) of the proletariat (*Militarismus nach innen*<sup>2</sup>). A number of International congresses (the Paris Congress in 1889, the Brussels Congress in 1891, the Zürich Congress in 1893 and finally the Stuttgart Congress in 1907) in their resolutions gave a fully formulated expression of this view. The connection between militarism and capitalism was most fully explained in the Stuttgart resolution, although in accordance with the agenda ("On International Conflicts") the Stuttgart Congress was more concerned with that aspect of militarism which the Germans call "*Militarismus nach aussen*." The following is the passage of that resolution bearing on it:

"Wars between capitalist states are, as a rule, the result of their competition on the world market, because every state strives not only to safeguard its old markets, but to win new markets, and in this connection

<sup>1</sup> External militarism.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Internal militarism.—*Ed.*

the subjugation of foreign nations and countries plays the principal part. These wars are also caused by continuous rivalry in armaments, called forth by militarism, which is the principal weapon of the class rule of the bourgeoisie and of the economic and political subjugation of the working class.

"Wars are facilitated by nationalist prejudices, which are systematically fostered in the civilised countries in the interests of the ruling classes for the purpose of diverting the proletarian masses from their own class tasks and forcing them to forget their duty of international class solidarity.

"Thus, wars are rooted in the very nature of capitalism; they will cease only when the capitalist system is abolished, or when the enormity of human and monetary sacrifices, caused by the development of military technique, and the outburst of popular indignation called forth by armaments bring about the abolition of that system. The working class, from which the soldiers are mainly drawn and by whom the material sacrifices are mainly borne, is particularly a natural enemy of war, since wars conflict with the aim it pursues, namely, the creation of an economic system based on the principles of socialism, a system that will really bring about the solidarity of nations."

## II

Thus, the connection between the principles of militarism and of capitalism has been firmly established among Socialists, and there are no differences of opinion on that point. However, the recognition of this connection does not concretely define the anti-militarist *tactics* of the Socialists and does not solve the practical problem of how the struggle against the burden of militarism is to be carried on and how wars are to be prevented. And it is precisely in the answers to this question that one notes considerable divergence in the views of the Socialists. At the Stuttgart Congress these differences could be observed in a particularly palpable manner.

At one extreme we find German Social-Democrats of the Vollmar type. They argue that since militarism is the child of capitalism, since wars are a necessary concomitant of capitalist development, there is no need for any special anti-militarist activity. That is exactly what Vollmar declared at the Essen *Parteitag*. On the question of what the Social-Democrats are to do in the event of a declaration of war, the majority of the German Social-Democrats—with Bebel and Vollmar at their head—persistently maintain that Social-Democrats must defend their fatherland from attacks, that they are in duty bound to take part in a "defensive" war. This postulate led Vollmar to declare in Stuttgart that "all our love for

humanity cannot prevent us from being good Germans," and led the Social-Democratic deputy, Noske, to proclaim in the Reichstag that in the event of a war against Germany "the Social-Democrats will not lag behind the bourgeois parties and will shoulder the rifle." From this position Noske had to take only one step more to declare: "We want Germany to be as well-armed as possible."

The other extreme is represented by the small group of followers of Hervé. The Hervéists argue that the proletariat has no fatherland. Hence, all wars are waged in the interests of the capitalists; hence, the proletariat must fight against every kind of war. The proletariat must reply to every declaration of war by declaring a military strike and insurrection. This is what the anti-militarist propaganda must amount to in the main. Hence, in Stuttgart, Hervé proposed the following draft resolution:

"The congress demands that *every declaration of war, from whatever quarter it may emanate, be answered by a military strike and insurrection.*"

Such are the two "extreme" positions on this question held among the Western Socialists. The two diseases, which still cripple the activity of the socialist proletariat in the West, are reflected in them "like the sun in a drop of water": opportunist tendencies on one side, anarchist phrasemongering on the other.

First of all, a few remarks about patriotism. That the "proletarians have no fatherland" is actually stated in *The Communist Manifesto*; that the position of Vollmar, Noske and Co. is a "flagrant violation" of this fundamental proposition of *international* socialism is equally true. But it does not follow from this that Hervé and the Hervéists are right when they assert that it is immaterial to the proletariat in which fatherland it lives: whether it lives in monarchist Germany, republican France or despotic Turkey. The fatherland, *i.e.*, the given political, cultural and social environment, is the most powerful factor in the class struggle of the proletariat, and if Vollmar is wrong in establishing a kind of "truly German" attitude of the proletariat towards the "fatherland," Hervé is not less wrong in treating such an important factor of the proletarian struggle for emancipation in an unpardonably uncritical fashion. The proletariat cannot treat the political, social and cultural conditions of its struggle with indifference or equa-



nimity, consequently, it cannot remain indifferent to the destiny of its country. But it is interested in the destiny of its country only *in so far* as it affects its class struggle, and not by virtue of some bourgeois "patriotism," which sounds altogether indecent on the lips of a Social-Democrat.

The other question is more complicated—the attitude towards militarism and war. It is obvious at the very first glance that Hervé confuses these two questions unpardonably and forgets the cause and effect as between capitalism and war; if the proletariat had adopted Hervé's tactics it would have condemned itself to futile work: it would have used all its fighting preparedness (he talks of insurrection, does he not?) to fight the consequences (war), while allowing the cause (capitalism) to continue.

The anarchist method of reasoning is revealed here in full measure. The blind faith in the miraculous power of every "*action directe*," the abstraction of this "direct action" from the general social and political situation without analysing it in the least—in a word, "the arbitrary mechanical conception of social phenomena" (according to K. Liebknecht's expression) is obvious.

Hervé's plan is "very simple": on the day of the declaration of war the Socialist soldiers desert, and the reservists declare a strike and stay at home.

But "a reservists' strike is not passive resistance: the working class would soon pass on to open resistance, to insurrection, and this latter would have more chances of success, because the active army would be on the frontier of the country." (G. Hervé, *Leur Patrie*.)

Such is this "effective, direct and practical plan," and, certain of its success, Hervé proposes to reply to every declaration of war by a military strike and insurrection.

As is clearly seen from the above, the question here is not whether the proletariat should, when it deems it expedient, reply to a declaration of war by a strike and insurrection. The controversy centres round the question as to whether the proletariat should be bound by an obligation to reply to *every* war by insurrection. To adopt the latter policy means depriving the proletariat of the choice of the moment for the decisive battle and leaving that choice to its enemies. It is not the proletariat that

is to choose the moment of struggle in accordance with its own interests, when its general socialist class consciousness is at its height, when it is well organised, when the ground is favourable, etc., etc.; no, the bourgeois governments could provoke it to an uprising even when the conditions were unfavourable for it, e.g., by a declaration of such a war as is specially capable of calling forth patriotic and chauvinist sentiments among broad strata of the population; a war that would isolate the rebellious proletariat. Moreover, one must not forget that the bourgeoisie—which in every country, from monarchist Germany down to republican France and democratic Switzerland, fiercely persecutes anti-militarist activities in peace-time—would come down ruthlessly on any attempt at a military strike in the event of war, at a time when a state of war, martial law, courts martial, etc., are in force.

Kautsky is right when he says of Hervé's idea: "The idea of a strike against war was prompted by 'good' motives, it is noble and heroic, but it is heroic folly."

The proletariat may reply to the declaration of war by a military strike if it finds it expedient and appropriate; it may, among other methods of achieving the social revolution, resort also to a military strike; but it is not in the interests of the proletariat to bind itself down to this "tactical recipe."

That is precisely the way the Stuttgart International Congress answered this controversial question.

### III

But while the views of the Hervéists are "heroic folly," the position of Vollmar, Noske and their adherents of the "Right wing" is, on the other hand, opportunist cowardice. Since militarism is the offspring of capital and will fall with it—they argued in Stuttgart, and especially in Essen—there is no need for special anti-militarist agitation: no such agitation should be carried on. But—was the rejoinder made to them in Stuttgart—the radical solution of the labour and woman's problems, for instance, is also impossible so long as the capitalist system prevails; nevertheless, we are fighting for labour legislation, for the extension of civil rights to women, etc. Special anti-militarist propaganda must be

conducted all the more energetically because cases of the intervention of military forces in the struggle between labour and capital become increasingly frequent, and the importance of militarism not only during the present struggle of the proletariat, but also in the future, at the moment of the social revolution, becomes increasingly obvious.

The need for special anti-militarist propaganda is supported not only by proof based on principles but also by important historical experience. Belgium in this respect is in advance of all the other countries. The Belgian Labour Party, apart from the general propaganda of the ideas of anti-militarism, has organised groups of socialist youth, the "Young Guard" ("*Jeunes Gardes*"). The groups of the same district form the District Federation; all the district federations, in their turn, are united in a National Federation with the "General Council" at their head. The organs of the "Young Guard" (*La Jeunesse—c'est l'avenir, De Caserne, De Loteling*, and others) have a circulation of tens of thousands! The Walloon Federation, consisting of 62 local groups with 10,000 members, is the strongest of all the federations; in all the "Young Guard" now consists of 121 local groups.

Simultaneously with agitation in the press, intense oral agitation is carried on: in January and September (the months when recruits are called up) popular meetings and processions are organised in the principal cities of Belgium; at open air meetings outside the premises of the *mairies*,<sup>1</sup> Socialist speakers explain the meaning of militarism to the young recruits. The "General Council" of the "Young Guard" has set up a "Grievances Committee" the function of which is to collect information concerning all cases of injustice in the barracks. This information is published daily in the central organ of the Party, *Le Peuple*, under the heading "From the Army." Anti-militarist propaganda does not stop at the doorstep of the barracks; the Socialist soldiers form groups for the purpose of carrying on propaganda in the army. At the present time there are about fifteen such groups ("Soldiers' Unions").

Following the Belgian model, anti-militarist propaganda is

<sup>1</sup> *Mairie*—town hall.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

being carried on in France,<sup>1</sup> Switzerland, Austria and other countries, such propaganda varying in intensity and in form of organisation.

Thus, special anti-militarist activity is not only particularly necessary, but practically expedient and useful. Therefore, inasmuch as Vollmar opposed it, pointing to the impossible police conditions in Germany and to the danger of the Party organisations being smashed on this account, the question was reduced to a concrete analysis of the conditions in the given country, to a question of fact and not to a question of principle. Although, in this connection, too, Jaurès was quite justified in saying that as German Social-Democracy, in its youth, had survived the hard times of the Anti-Socialist Law and the iron hand of Prince Bismarck and has now become incomparably bigger and stronger, it need no longer fear persecution by the present rulers. But Vollmar is doubly wrong when he tries to argue that special anti-militarist propaganda is inexpedient in principle.

Not less opportunistic is the conviction of Vollmar and his followers that it is the duty of Social-Democrats to take part in a defensive war. Kautsky's brilliant criticism completely demolished these views. Kautsky pointed out that sometimes, especially in a moment of patriotic intoxication, it is utterly impossible to be clear as to whether the given war was called forth by defensive or offensive aims (the example quoted by Kautsky: did Japan attack or defend herself at the beginning of the Russo-Japanese war?). Social-Democrats would be entangled in the meshes of diplomatic negotiations if they took it into their heads to determine their attitude towards war on the basis of such a criterion. Social-Democrats may even find themselves in the position of having to demand aggressive wars. In 1848 (the Hervéists, too, would do well to remember this) Marx and Engels considered a war on the part of Germany against Russia to be necessary. Later on

<sup>1</sup> An interesting feature of the work carried on by the French is the organisation of the so-called "soldier's sou"; every week a worker pays one-sou to the secretary of his union; the sums gathered in this way are sent to the soldiers "as a reminder of the fact that even while in soldier's uniform they belong to the exploited class and that they must not forget this under any circumstances."

they attempted to influence public opinion in England in order to induce England to go to war against Russia. Incidentally, Kautsky constructs the following hypothetical instance:

"Let us assume," he says, "that the revolutionary movement gains a victory in Russia and that under the influence of this victory power passes into the hands of the proletariat in France; on the other hand, let us assume that a coalition of European monarchs is formed against the new Russia. Will international Social-Democracy protest if the French Republic then comes to the assistance of Russia?" (K. Kautsky, *Our Views on Patriotism and War*.)

Obviously, in this question (as also in views on "patriotism") it is not the offensive or defensive character of the war, but the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat, or rather, the interests of the international movement of the proletariat that represent the only possible point of view from which the question of the attitude of Social-Democracy towards a given phenomenon in international relations can be considered and solved.

To what lengths opportunism is capable of going in these questions too is shown by the recent utterance of Jaurès. In expressing his views on the international situation in an obscure German liberal bourgeois newspaper, he defends the alliance of France and England with Russia against the accusation of anti-pacific intentions and considers this alliance to be a "guarantee of peace"; he welcomes the fact that "we have now lived to see an alliance of England and Russia, two ancient enemies."

In her "Open Letter" in the latest issue of *Die Neue Zeit*, Rosa Luxemburg gives an excellent appraisal of this view and a sharp retort to Jaurès.

First of all R. Luxemburg states that to talk of an alliance between "Russia" and "England" means "talking in the language of bourgeois politicians," for the interests of the capitalist states and the interests of the proletariat in foreign politics are diametrically opposed to each other, and it is impossible to speak of harmony of interests in the domain of foreign relations. If militarism is the offspring of capitalism, then wars, too, cannot be eliminated by the intrigues of rulers and diplomats, and the task of the Socialists is not to create illusions on this score, but, on the contrary, always to expose the hypocrisy and the impotence of diplomatic "peace measures."

The main point of the "Letter," however, is the appraisal of the alliance of England and France with Russia, which Jaurès praises so much. The European bourgeois enabled tsarism to repel the revolutionary onslaught.

"In trying now to transform the temporary victory over the revolution into a final victory, absolutism is resorting above all to the tried method of all tottering despotic governments—to successes in foreign politics."

All the alliances of Russia at the present time mean:

"...the Holy Alliance of the bourgeoisie of Western Europe with Russian counter-revolution, with the stranglers and executioners of Russian and Polish fighters for freedom; they mean the strengthening of the bloodiest reaction, not only in Russia, but also in international relations . . . That is why the most elementary task of the Socialists and proletarians of all countries is to oppose the alliance with counter-revolutionary Russia with all their might....

"How is one to explain," asks R. Luxemburg, addressing herself to Jaurès, "the fact that you who once delivered brilliant speeches in the French Chamber opposing the Russian loan, you who but a few weeks ago published in your newspaper *l'Humanité* an ardent appeal to public opinion against the bloody work of the courts martial in Russian Poland, will strive 'in a most energetic fashion' to make the government of the bloody executioners of the Russian revolution and of the Persian uprising an influential factor in European politics, to make the Russian gallows the pillars of international peace? How is it possible to reconcile your peaceful plans based on the Franco-Russian and Anglo-Russian alliances with the protest recently made by the French Socialist parliamentary fraction and by the Administrative Committee of the National Council of the Socialist Party against Fallières' visit to Russia, with the protest which fervently defends the interests of the Russian revolution and bears your own signature? If the President of the French Republic wanted to refer to your ideas about the international situation, he would declare in reply to your protest: whoever approves of the aim must approve of the means, whoever regards the alliance with tsarist Russia as a guarantee of international peace must accept everything that strengthens that alliance and fosters friendship.

"What would you have said if Socialists and revolutionaries had been found in Germany, in Russia and in England, who 'in the interests of peace' had recommended an alliance with the government of the restoration or the government of Cavaignac, or the government of Thiers and Jules Favre, and had lent such an alliance their moral authority?!..."

This letter speaks for itself, and the Russian Social-Democrats can only congratulate Comrade R. Luxemburg on this protest of hers and on the defence of the Russian revolution before the international proletariat.

August [July] 1908.

## WHAT SHOULD NOT BE IMITATED IN THE GERMAN LABOUR MOVEMENT

K. LEGIEN, one of the most prominent and responsible representatives of the German trade unions, recently published an account of his visit to America in the form of a rather bulky book entitled *The Labour Movement in America*.

As one of the most prominent representatives not only of the German but also of the international trade union movement, K. Legien made this visit appear to have special, so to say, state importance. For years he conducted negotiations about this visit with the Socialist Party of America and with the "American Federation of Labour," the federation of trade unions led by the famous (or rather infamous) Gompers. When it was learned that Karl Liebknecht was going to America, Legien did not want to go at the same time because he

"... wanted to avoid the simultaneous appearance in the United States of two public speakers whose views on Party tactics and on the importance and value of the separate branches of the labour movement did not entirely coincide."

K. Legien collected a very large amount of material on the trade union movement in America, but he has been quite unable to utilise it in his book, which is mainly filled with rubbish in the shape of fragmentary accounts of his journey, mere feuilletons in content and worse than feuilletons in style. Even the rules of the trade unions in America, in which Legien took special interest, have not been studied, not worked up, but merely translated, without system and incompletely.

One episode in Legien's tour is exceedingly instructive and reveals very clearly *two tendencies* in the world labour movement, especially in the German labour movement.

Legien visited the United States chamber of deputies, called "Cöngress." The democratic regime of the republic made a favour-

able impression on the man who was brought up in police-ridden Prussia, and he notes with a pleasure which is quite understandable that the state in America supplies every Congressman not only with a special room furnished according to the last word in comfort, but also with a paid secretary to do a great deal of his work. The simplicity and lack of constraint in the bearing of the Congressmen and of the Speaker differed sharply from what Legien had seen in other European parliaments, especially in Germany. In Europe a Social-Democrat could not even dream of addressing a speech of greeting to a bourgeois parliament at its official session! But in America this was very simple and the title of Social-Democrat did not frighten anyone . . . except *that very Social-Democrat!*

It was here that the American bourgeois fashion of "killing" unstable Socialists "with kindness," as well as the German opportunist fashion of renouncing socialism to please the "kind," affable and democratic bourgeoisie, was revealed.

Legien's speech of greeting was translated into English (democracy was not a bit frightened by hearing an "alien" language in its parliament), over 200 Congressmen, each in turn, shook hands with Legien as the "guest" of the republic; the Speaker of Congress thanked him particularly.

"The form and content of my speech of greeting," writes Legien, "were favourably commented upon in the Socialist press both of the United States and of Germany. Some German editors, however, could not refrain from mentioning that my speech proved once again that it is impossible for a Social-Democrat to deliver a Social-Democratic speech before a bourgeois audience. . . . Well, if they, these editors, were in my place they would no doubt have delivered a speech against capitalism and in favour of a mass strike, whereas I thought it important to emphasise before that parliament that the Social-Democratic and the trade union workers of Germany want peace among nations and desire, through peace, the further development of culture to the highest possible level."

Poor "editors"—Legien has annihilated them with his "statesman"-like speech. In the German labour movement the opportunism of the leaders of the trade union movement in general, and of Legien especially and in particular, has long been a matter of common knowledge, and many class conscious workers appraise them correctly. But in our country, in Russia, where there is too



much talk about the "model" of *European* socialism, and where in this connection it is precisely the worst, the most objectionable features of the "model" that are selected, it will not be amiss to dwell at greater length on Legien's speech.

The leader of the army of two million German trade unionists, i.e., the Social-Democratic trade unions, a member of the Social-Democratic fraction in the German Reichstag, delivers a purely liberal bourgeois speech before the supreme assembly of the representatives of capitalist America. Naturally, not a single liberal, not even an Octobrist, would have refused to endorse the words about "peace" and "culture."

And when the Socialists in Germany remarked that this was not a Social-Democratic speech, our "leader" of the wage slaves of capital poured lofty scorn on the Socialists. What are "editors" compared with a "practical politician" and the collector of workers' pennies? Our philistine Narcissus has the same contempt for editors as a police pompadour in a certain country has for the "third element."

They, "these editors," to be sure, would have delivered a speech "against capitalism."

Just think what this quasi-Socialist is mocking at: he is mocking at the idea of a Socialist taking it into his head that he must talk *against* capitalism. Such an idea is utterly foreign to the "statesmen" of German opportunism; they talk in a way that *will not offend* "capitalism." And while disgracing themselves by this flunkeyish renunciation of socialism, they glory in their shame.

Legien does not belong to the man-in-the-street category. He is the representative of an army, or to be more exact, of the officers' corps of the trade union army. His speech is not an accident or a slip of the tongue, nor is it a solitary escapade or a mistake committed by a provincial German "office clerk" overawed by the kindness of the American capitalists who betray no trace of police arrogance. If it were *only* this, it would not be worth while dwelling on Legien's speech.

But obviously this is not the case.

At the International Congress in Stuttgart, half the German delegation turned out to be precisely this sort of miserable social-

ists, and they voted for the ultra-opportunist resolution on the colonial question.<sup>1</sup>

If you take the German magazine, the *Socialist* (??) *Monthly*<sup>2</sup> you will always find in it articles by public men like Legien, thoroughly opportunist articles which have *nothing* in common with socialism and which touch on *all* the most important questions of the labour movement.

And although the "official" explanation of the "official" German Party is that "no one reads" the *Socialist Monthly*, that it has no influence, etc., this is *untrue*. The Stuttgart "case" proved that it is untrue. The most prominent and responsible public men, parliamentarians, leaders of trade unions, who contribute to the *Socialist Monthly*, are constantly and undeviatingly spreading their viewpoint among the masses.

"The official optimism" of the German Party was long ago recorded in its own camp by those whom Legien called "these editors," a nickname at once contemptuous (from the standpoint of a bourgeois) and honourable (from the standpoint of a Socialist). And the more often liberals and liquidators in Russia (Trotsky, of course, included) attempt to *transplant* this pleasant characteristic to *our soil*, the more resolutely must we combat it.

German Social-Democracy has very great merits. It has a theory, strictly worked out owing to the fight waged by Marx against all the Höchbergs, Dührings and Co., a theory which our Narodniki are vainly trying to evade, or revise, in an opportunist fashion. It has a mass organisation, newspapers, trade unions, political unions—that same mass organisation which is becoming so clearly crystallised in our country in the form of the victory which the Marxists-*Pravda*-ists<sup>3</sup> are gaining everywhere—in the Duma elections and in the field of the daily press, in the elections to the insurance council and in the trade unions. The efforts of our liquidators, whom the workers have "removed from their posts," to evade this question of mass organisation in Russia as

<sup>1</sup> See article "The International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart" in this volume—*Ed Eng ed.*

<sup>2</sup> *Sozialistische Monatshefte*—*Ed. Eng ed.*

<sup>3</sup> I.e., the Bolsheviks.—*Ed.*

adapted to Russian conditions are as futile as the vain efforts of the Narodniki, and signify a similar intellectual *split-off* from the labour movement.

But the merits of German Social-Democracy are merits not because of disgraceful speeches such as those delivered by Legien and of the "speeches" (in the press) of the contributors of the *Socialist Monthly*, but *in spite* of them. We must not gloss over or confuse by "official optimistic" phrases the undoubted *disease* of the German Party which is manifesting itself in phenomena of this kind, we must expose it before the Russian workers, so that we may learn, by the experience of an older movement, what should not be imitated.

April 1914.

